

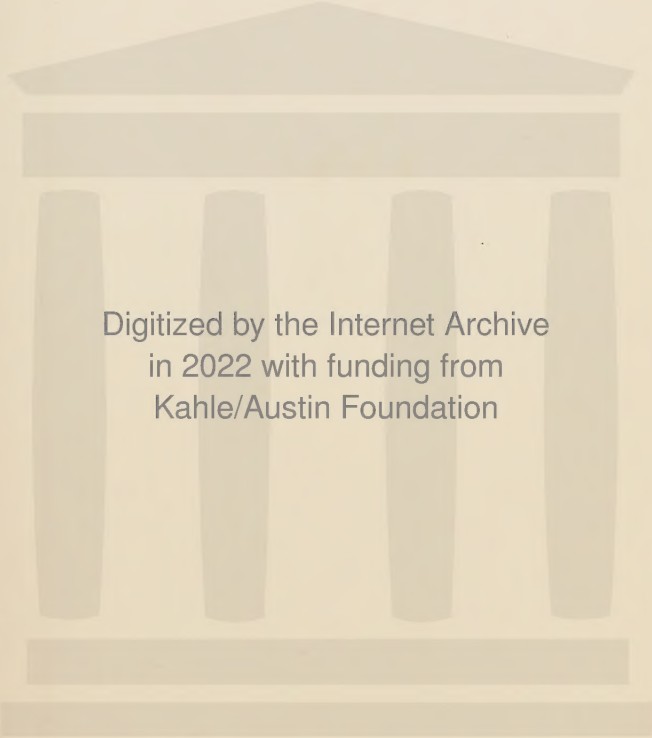
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IMPRESSIONS AND MEMORIES



LORD RIBBLESDALE
From a portrait by Sargent
(Tate Gallery)

IMPRESSIONS AND MEMORIES

By

LORD RIBBLESDALE

With Preface by his Daughter
LADY WILSON

*With Colour Frontispiece
and Eight other Plates*



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PREFACE

MY father was engaged in writing these reminiscences when he was overtaken by the long illness from which he did not recover. The last part of the book, which would have given balance to the early chapters, was never written, and many of the proofs awaited his final correction.

He possessed so strong a feeling for form in all things—in literature, in art, in dress and manners—that he was incapable of leaving anything that he wrote with loose ends and rough edges; but the unfinished sketch sometimes gives as much pleasure as the finished picture, so I am tempted to publish what can only be called a fragment of his book. Many of his old friends have begged me to do so, and I dare believe that those who did not know him personally will find enough charm and vivacity in these pages to justify my decision.

With his manuscript and notes before me, here at Gisburne, vivid recollections of my father's flood back to me. The winters passed with him here were pleasant seasons in my teens. They were spent under rainy skies, it is true, but the short days

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and the long evenings are full of memories of him. In his oak-panelled room, he made for himself and for everyone who entered it a sympathetic and stimulating climate, with the aid of a hot fire, good reading-lamps and lots of books.

On a table, covered with an old green table-cloth, he kept his low-crowned brown hats, his covert-coat, a riding-whip or two, and the silk muffler which he knotted over his riding-tie. On the chintz-covered sofa of his room he read much, in that selective, fastidious way in which the literary epicure reads. The writing-table, which had been his father's, and had shared in the family life at Fontainebleau, was ample and inviting. Its equipment was simple—plenty of quill pens, which he handled with the skilful artistry with which a painter handles his brush, and a good Georgian inkstand provided with red and black ink. As a child I can remember his habit of copying a quotation on a half-sheet of paper, and propping it up against this inkstand. His handwriting was graceful and scholarly; when accused of illegibility he would describe it as cuneiform.

There was a frugal restraint about his room, and a great simplicity in his possessions. This sparse habit may have had its origin in the lean years of his boyhood. I seem to recognize a thriftiness which I associate with French ideas of those days. Be that as it may, he enjoyed *pot-au-feu* life—poached eggs and a cup of strong tea for dinner,

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a pair of bedroom slippers on his feet, and an open book on his lap.

He needed very little waiting on, but all those who served him loved him. He had an especial message for the simple people of this world, they felt no shyness with him; there is a passage in his book on the Queen's Hounds which illustrates his relations with old servants. In the summer of 1893, Queen Victoria presented J. Miles, a stud groom, with a medal in honour of his fifty years' service. "I rode over to Cumberland Lodge the same evening," my father writes, "to see and congratulate Mrs. Miles. Tea and a talk with Mrs. Miles being one of the many pleasant things which come with the Mastership of the Queen's Hounds. It was a most happy tea."

Gisburne days meant a lot of riding, either hunting with the two packs of harriers (the Craven and the Pendle Forest) or, in summer, hacking round the estate. These were delightful ways of enjoying his companionship. The grass-land of the Ribble valley, and the rough pastures of the high land—a tawny chart dissected by limestone walls—make a perfect riding country.

At the farmhouses he would stop to chat with the tenant farmers, exchange comments on the inclemency of the weather, express admiration for the type of cross-bred short-horn cow which is the glory of the Craven farmer, or discuss the prospects

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of a good "fog"—a local term for the emerald green aftermath of the meadows, after the hay has been cut. He was not a farmer himself, in practise or theory, but the same instinct that prevented him from buying a bad horse, or an unworthy picture, led him to recognize the good points in stock.

The cavalcade would pass on. It consisted of my parents and two or three of us children; my mother often hatless, her golden head like a ray of sunlight in the landscape. Some small inviting fences were usually negotiated before the end of the ride. He loved jumping passionately; my mother once accused him of having behaved, out hunting, "like an intoxicated flea." Though he disapproved of "larking," he could seldom resist it entirely with a free horse under him, and never was anyone better at making a horse take off on its hocks and kick back over the banks with a double rail of timber, which is the fence most common in our country.

He would advise us how to ride, and though he would get very angry with egregiously stupid mistakes, he was encouraging at all times, praising us for good hands and horsemanship whenever we deserved it, and very often when we did not. My mother was a harder taskmaster; the high standard of excellence which she demanded of all performance was a little difficult to live up to. She was as relentlessly exacting in all that she did herself. The confection of a baby's bonnet, the phrasing of a

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Chopin *étude*, or the technique of one of her sketches, elicited her harshest criticism if they fell short of her ideal. Children are easily satisfied by their own efforts, and we felt more comfortable as to how these would be received by my father, who had the most amazing power of making one feel pleased with oneself. "The garment of praise" from him was an enchantment as complete as that which was wrought for Cinderella by the wand of her fairy god-mother. And so it was to him we turned to show our literary ventures, or our drawings. This delicate faculty of praise was accompanied by his radiant smile, and a knowing nod which made one feel that it was not only the obvious good, but something so subtle as to be overlooked by others, that he recognised.

After the ride home, through the avenue of venerable Whig lime-trees, the cosy evening opened up before us. My brothers and sisters used to draw, and my mother would read aloud. My father, drowsy in his arm-chair, would listen to Scott, Whyte-Melville or Thackeray, and when appealed to would rouse himself to assist the artists. He was a first-rate draughtsman, with a masterly pencil touch, full of humour and sound drawing. On foolscap paper he used, with felicity, faint washes of colour with pen or pencil outline; he assured us that he was incapable of employing the sterner stuff of the true water-colourist.

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An excellent caricaturist, his style was so individual that his drawings needed no signature; but he was lazy about doing them, and waited too often on inspiration. An old game-keeper, a dealer's nag, a Frenchman on a bathing *plage* would provide his subjects.

When we drew he would always point out the stock mistakes; the feet were too small, the figure was not squarely planted on them, or he would emphasize the importance of the cast shadow which makes the figure stand. He reminded us of how Edouard Detaille had said to him, when he was a boy at Fontainebleau. "Dessinez, dessinez, dessinez! Il faut dessiner les bons-hommes dans la rue."

As we became older we shared our books with him. He would recommend us to read what he was enjoying, and we were allowed, even encouraged, to range wide. In our conversations with him, the characters of fiction would mingle with our friends who took on their appearance, their idiosyncrasies and their names. It was a sort of Pirandello game. Mrs.—was Madame Arnoux in "L'Education Sentimentale," and Colonel—the Oblonsky of "Anna Karénine." It made a secret and delightful code between us.

My father read a good deal of French, but his reading was confined to the novels which were accepted as the classics of his younger days. He

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was less familiar with more recent French writers. In one of his chapters in "The Queen's Hounds" he comments on the fact that no French novelist has ever drawn upon hunting as a background for his characters. "There is no room for horses," he writes, "in the French novel, excepting, perhaps, for the brougham-horse who devours the paved streets on his way to an assignation. Hunting and all that has to do with it is popular in England in the sense of being in the bone and sinew of the people at large; in France it is the exclusive amusement of a small class, and in no sense national. Madame Bovary and Monsieur de Camors, Sappho and Bel Ami did not hunt. Their tastes and talents lay in other directions." And my father contrasts the French novelist with Mr. Disraeli thus:

"Mr. Disraeli's fine observation told him that something to do with riding across country and falling on your head must come into any true picture of English society, in the most national and unrestricted sense of the word society. What can be better than the steeplechase in 'Coningsby,' the after-dinner discussion over its impromptu conditions, and the emergencies of the water-jump? I do not know whether people read Mr. Disraeli's novels now. They should. But in this particular book nine out of ten Englishmen will admit Mr. Guy Flouncey to be a more life-like figure than Sidonia, merely because his horse lay across his diaphragm in the

brook. Although upon one occasion he scoured the field on his Arabian—a mare of course—I cannot suppose that Mr. Disraeli had any personal experience of steeplechase riding; yet his artistic sense enables him, as it were, to ride a capital race home, and indeed gets him over some little solecisms, such as the yeoman's white mare making the running at a severe pace, lying at the time third or fourth—which would have been fatal to a less gifted writer.

“All this sort of thing, which makes the characters breathe and which oxygenises the atmosphere in a story of English life, can contribute nothing to a French novel. So far from that, I even remember M. Octave Feuillet playing the deuce with the disturbing conception he had given me of one of his most charming heroines by taking her out riding. After hearing that ‘elle bondissait légèrement dans sa selle,’ I confess I took less interest in her perplexed future. The French have never had—it is equivalent to saying that they have never wanted—a Whyte-Melville or a Surtees.”

My father loved France. He spoke French without any English accent, idiomatically and appreciatively. He liked and understood the *finesse* of the language. His was the kind of personality greatly admired in France. My mother told me that when she and he visited the Salon to see his portrait by Sargent exhibited there, he was followed by an embarrassingly large crowd from room to room.

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People were nudging each other as they recognized the subject of the picture and whispering, "Ce grand diable de milord anglais."

I do not think that modern Paris won his allegiance. Latterly, certainly, the thralldom of the Ritz and its cosmopolitan element was little to his fancy. He loved the "charmant pays de France," the flat stretches of the Seine, silvered by willows, the gaunt grandeur of the Forest, stag-headed oak trees dying above the undergrowth, "confusions of grey rocks, splashes of lonely water." He also enjoyed the life of small busy Parisian streets, all the *petit commerce*, women *en cheveux* in black shawls doing their marketing among the big orange pumpkins, and the barrows laden with snowy cream-cheese. He liked the cries of the street vendors, the pipe of the goat-herd; all the sights and sounds that recalled the Paris of his childhood.

In one of the chapters of this book he gives a picture of his early experiences of French hunting in the days of Napoleon III. I am tempted, for this reason, to quote, from his book on the Buckhounds, some later experiences of hunting in France. During a visit to Paris he determined to renew his youth by riding a hireling at Fontainebleau, which he secured by telephoning to the local job-master. He shall tell the rest:

"I arrived at the Hotel de France in ample time for a capital breakfast. The waiter recommended me

doubtedly hastened by the careless packing of my father's bottle of tonic, of a strongly coloured and astringent brand, amongst his clean linen. English families always travelled with their tonics and prescriptions. Boucher, on the other hand, besides dealing with porters, guards, and even policemen, with an authority which filled us children with pride and confidence, visited our compartment at every stop to assure my mother of a truceless devotion to the baggage and our other interests. "Je surveille tout," or as a variation, "Il faut tout surveiller." Nor was this surveillance confined to the baggage, for having regained his own carriage, he hung far out of the window with his eyes earnestly fixed on the situation of ours for some time after the train had cleared the stations, and in this way, as I did the same, we were able to exchange long glances of mutual confidence and encouragement.

It was the fashion of those days for English people who had been brought up in a certain way to travel with couriers; yet even then their day was passing, and I do not think Boucher got much to do. His headquarters were at the Hôtel Westminster, in the Rue de la Paix, where, between 1862 and 1870, we stayed a good deal—once for a whole winter. Here, when *en disponibilité*, he occupied, with one or two *confrères*, a roomy and airy attic, and kept a number of canaries. Thus, from time to time, we met, and he used to propose to me—with

THE EXODUS ABROAD

my mother's approval—a promenade *en ville*. We both preferred the streets to the *bourgeoisie* of the Tuilleries gardens or the fashionables and nursery maids of the Champs Elysées. When we got tired of walking, which we quickly did, for Boucher was a fat man with small, tightly-shod feet, we rested at a café on one or other of the Grands Boulevards. Boucher would then order a *bock* or an absinthe, and would offer me a *sirop*. There we sat for the most part in a contented silence, watching the slow-moving current on the pavement.

But the narrative of our exodus must now close, and the scene be transferred to Fontainebleau.

Yet, before leaving Paris, let me record an Experience I there sustained—a palpable experience, and so deserving of a capital “E.” We stayed on our first arrival under Boucher's care, as related, for two or three days in Paris at a Rue de Rivoli hotel—Meurice's or the Windsor—*au premier*, our form being still well maintained; and we came in for the Emperor's Fête in glorious weather.

To this day, and its occurrences, I ascribe my first defined apprehension of colour and processional music. I can remember nothing before this of their joint effect in my childish philosophy.

The Cent Gardes, in cerulean and cuirasses, their handsome horses pacing the streets harmoniously to what seemed the eternal strains of “*Partant pour la Syrie*”—the tune which Queen Victoria in one

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he complains in "The Queen's Hounds" of the tameness of the country and the deep going over plots of intense cultivation, which it pained him to gallop across. This, he writes, is only characteristic of that particular country, for "in some parts of France, notably the Landes and La Sologne, there is plenty of rough country, although not so wild as in the beginning of the 19th century, when land was sold *au son de la voix*, and the stretch of ground reached by a man's voice sold for a few francs."

Gisburne Park was let for some time after my father's marriage, so for many years the greater part of each hunting season was spent at Easton Grey, where my aunt, Mrs. Graham Smith, and her husband, received our entire family. He converted some farm buildings in the village into loose boxes for his hunters, painting their woodwork the particular "Guardi" green which he admired. The stabling is just visible if you stand on the terrace, and look across the pastures where the giant elms stand, haunted by rooks, with quiet Avon flowing below.

There is a smiling benediction about the house. Gay with flowers and chintzes, and stored with books, it was a never failing pleasure to him to be there. His host and hostess were dear to him, he shared many of his sister-in-law's tastes, and all her jokes, and, with my uncle, stories of old Harrow days were affectionately recalled.

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He made countless other devoted friends in the Beaufort country, and had many a good hunt there. The farmers—all capital riders, neighbours and sportsmen—were invited in 1893, when he was Master of the Queen's Hounds, to have a day with him in the Old Berkshire country. The account of this day, evidently taken word for word from his hunting diary, appears in his book on the Buckhounds. It breathes the very spirit of my father in his best hunting mood (and those who ever hunted with him can bear witness how infectiously happy that mood could be). I have, therefore, added it to the end of my preface.

Whilst he was Master of the Buckhounds, 1892-95, my father lived at Englemere House, Ascot. It was afterwards bought by Lord Roberts. The house was conveniently placed for him, close to the Kennels, Cumberland Lodge, and the Swinley Deer Paddocks.

Those who saw him ride up the course on the first day of the Ascot Meeting have never forgotten it. He rode a bright chestnut horse called Curious, a conspicuous one, both for action and colour. In his dark green coat, wearing the green and gold embroidered belt from which hung the gold hound-couples, dating from the time of Queen Anne, with the blue haze of the distance behind, the June sky above and the emerald course in front of him, he was a figure to delight the eye.

To see him ride thus, in the perfection of his horsemanship, leading the Royal Procession, one felt that he was a worthy successor to that long line of Masters who from the time of Henry II had held the office. Members of the Brocas family, of Gascon origin, who for three hundred years were hereditary Masters, had they seen him that day—and who knows that they did not?—would have rejoiced in his gallant bearing and romantic person. The knightly spirit that had made them prominent on occasions where chivalry or *vénérerie* were at issue would have proudly claimed a fellowship with him.

As usual, many Frenchmen were present—Ascot is ever a favourite meeting with them—and they appreciated the *haute école* and that observance of things *stylé* that is dear to their hearts. To many of the older ones, the scene must have recalled some of the splendours of the Second Empire—the evening of which my father had watched as a boy in Paris and at Fontainebleau.

One of my father's less pleasant duties connected with Ascot was the onerous position he held as the St. Peter of the Royal Enclosure. He writes of it as a "terrible responsibility," and when one realises the relative number of vouchers issued then and now, he was certainly not overstating the case.

In these days, when the camera of the pressman spares neither age nor sex, the following episodes

related by him seems curiously out of perspective with our modern notions:

“In my time one incident occurred of a probably unique kind, which may here be recorded. I received a message which demanded very instant attention. It appeared that an individual with a Kodak was loose in the enclosure. He had commenced operations by several snaps at the Royal Party, and when last seen was actively engaged upon a group of duchesses. Needless to say that he was described to me as a complete radical in appearance. Hoping for my own sake, as well as for that of the Newcastle programme, that he might not turn out to be an Irish Member, I portrayed him to my green-plush-clad myrmidons, who, assisted by some good-natured volunteers, at once set off in pursuit. Owing to the congested state of the enclosure, progress was difficult, and the chase for some little time eluded them like a will-o’-the-wisp. He had been seen here, suspected there, noticed *flagrante delicto* somewhere else. At last, however, he was delivered into our hands, and haled into my presence. It ended rather tamely, for he turned out to be a distinguished visitor to our shores, accredited by the embassy of one of the great Powers, and a relative of an ex-crowned head. However, I administered a wordy reprimand or rather lecture on the trite thesis of *autres pays*, etc., and made him promise to banish the partner of his guilt to the boot of a distant drag.

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To this he sadly, but courteously, consented, and the incident closed. I only hope I invited him to luncheon.”¹

During the years I have been writing of, my grandmother made a summer home for us at the Dower House at Gisburne. For seventeen years she watched over the village, and in this way my father never lost touch with his estate and its people.

The picture of my grandmother, with her husband and my father, then a baby of a year old, which hangs in the round dining-room at Gisburne, is reproduced in this volume. It was painted at Fontainebleau, and possesses no great artistic merit, but it nevertheless gives something of the effortless beauty of my grandmother. Under the shade of the wide-brimmed hat, her pure profile detaches itself against the background of the forest. This picture, and a chalk drawing by Swinton, are the only records we possess of her classic loveliness, which was always a source of inspiration to my father.

It was not till 1895 that we got possession of the Park, and my grandmother moved to London. It was a wrench for her to leave Gisburne, but in her London house she made the same centre for us, and my father was finding it increasingly difficult to be away from London for any length of time. His

¹ This and other extracts from “The Queen’s Hounds” are made by the courteous permission of Messrs. Longmans.

work in the House of Lords, his various Boards, his Trusteeship, first of the National Portrait Gallery and later of the National Gallery, besides the L.C.C., had become insistent claims.

Although he was a lover of country life, he was very happy in London. His work was congenial to him, and filled his days with varied interests. He liked to snatch a few days' hunting or fishing; but I do not think, as he grew older, that he desired, or endured, long unbroken spells of the country.

Travelling did not tire him, and out of a weathered kit-bag, containing his stirrup-leathers (he rode too long to rely upon using any but his own), he would pull out his papers and settle down into a corner of the railway carriage to deal with his correspondence.

He liked change of environment: it exhilarated him to leave the verdant desolation of a wet day in the country and, a few hours later, to feel the pavement of St. James's under his feet and see the lights of Brooks's twinkling a welcome; or, the other way round, it was an equally pleasant adventure to turn his back on a London railway station, with the knowledge that he was speeding towards Gisborne, Leicestershire, or the Badminton country. Just as he loved change in his occupations, so he liked the diversity of the people around him. The originality of his mind, and his imagination, put him on terms of easy intercourse with all sorts and conditions of men. Much of the charm of his conversa-

tion lay in his gift of phrase, his power of observation, and his memory.

This power of observation was acute, whether applied to men, horses or country. Long years after their original meeting, he would recognise an acquaintance that chance had thrown across his path, and, with just as little data, I have seen him identify a horse he might only have seen once before; or, again, find his way home from hunting with unerring instinct in a country he knew not at all.

I have often wondered what sort of impression my father made on those he met for the first time. In spite of his good manners, he must have been alarming, though it is difficult to define why. Possibly we all feel a tremor before people and things we are not accustomed to, and I do not think one could ever get quite accustomed to him. His unexpected flashes of humour, his inexhaustible sympathy, his understanding of human frailties, came always as a surprise.

A less pleasant surprise, however, was his quick temper. Storms of a violent description would come up out of the blue in a most disconcerting manner. I remember a particularly tempestuous episode, when he was seeing off my eldest brother to India, at Victoria Station. In the confusion of changing his railway carriage at the last moment, a great-coat of my brother's was left in the first compartment he had entered. My father claimed the coat, loudly

and truculently, from the occupants of the carriage, two dark-complexioned gentlemen smoking black cigars; they complied with his request with enthusiasm, throwing the coat out of the window with such a will that it knocked my father's top hat sideways. With a leap forward he was on the step of the train, and just about to blacken further the traveller's dusky eye, when the whistle blew, and he was pulled back on to the platform by the onlookers.

My brother telegraphed from Calais that the stranger had gone up to him and asked him for my father's name and address, with the obvious intention of coffee for one and pistols for two, but my brother had talked him round, and they ended good friends.

Such scenes were easily provoked. In conversation he would do the same kind of thing. He would take exception to some statement, or disagree with some sentiment, and he would lose his self-control quite as quickly as his listeners would lose their nerve. Once the scud had blown over, however, the enchanting ripple of his wit would be resumed.

From 1896 until 1907 he was Liberal Whip in the House of Lords. He was a good speaker, he had great ease of manner, and always an individual handling of his subject. However flat this might promise to be, he could add sufficient savour to make slumbering peers rouse themselves, and to impose silence on those whose murmurings provide an unsought-for accompaniment to many a conscientious orator. In

that most difficult audience, he invariably, to use a stage phrase, "got across."

It was when he was making an after-dinner speech for the Artists' Benevolent Fund that Sargent first saw him and determined to paint him. He approached my father about it, but it was three or four years later that the picture was begun. There was much heart-searching as to the composition of the portrait, and the clothes that were to be worn. At first it was suggested that he should wear the dark green gala coat of the Master of the Buckhounds, but there was the difficulty of the leathers—an unpleasing mass of white for the painter. As my father always wore mufti when hunting, it was decided that he should be painted in this.

The background of the picture was another difficult decision. My mother and Mr. Sargent would have liked an architectural one, and with this in view they clambered, like burglars, all over the roofs and terraces of Somerset House, searching for grey pilasters that might come in well. Nothing of what they sought presented itself there, though I have a sketch in my possession, bought at the Sargent sale and presented to me by a kind friend, in which there is an indication of the figure standing on stone steps, with some columns behind it.

My mother was present at some of the early sittings, but her passionate keenness for the success of the portrait created a difficult atmosphere, and it was

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agreed by all concerned that the artist and model did better when left to themselves.

There is an inscription under the picture, where it now hangs in the new room of the Tate Gallery,¹ recording that the portrait was given by my father to the National Gallery in memory of his two sons. He will be handed down to future generations in company with them. The union that bound them together was something closer than the affectionate relation between father and sons—it was a brotherhood as well. Fifteen short years deprived him of both; he bore these sorrows without flinching, reckoning that the span of life must be measured, not by its length, but by its excellence.

Those who have read his life of Charles Lister will learn of the understanding that existed between them. With my elder brother Tommy, the association was no less intimate. The last year of the Boer War my parents went out to South Africa to be near him, and for several weeks my father trekked with his regiment—the 10th Hussars—having no other uniform than a veteran covert-coat, and no other weapon than an umbrella. He rejoiced in the free life of the veldt, moving with the Flying Column by day, sleeping under the star-powdered sky by night, riding the narrow-withered country-bred ponies, one of which he brought back to Gisburne as a hack. It died there, full of years and wisdom. My father's

The gift of Sir J. Duveen.

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utter disregard for danger made my brother tremble at times, lest he should be taken prisoner and suffer the penalty of a non-combatant.

In 1902 Tommy came back to England with the first contingent of troops, to take part in the celebrations in honour of King Edward's coronation. He had served with distinction throughout the campaign, and my father devoted time and trouble to organising a grand hunting season for him during the six months' leave he was given.

That year they hunted together with the Cottesmore, the Quorn and the Belvoir, guests of dear life-long friends, Lord and Lady Manners. So curiously alike were they, in seat and figure, that even I had difficulty at times in recognizing them out hunting; nor was there anything to distinguish between father and son in the boldness and spirit with which they rode over High Leicestershire.

The campaigning life had bitten deep into my brother's soul. When leave was ended, and he rejoined his regiment in India, the routine of peace soldiering in the hot weather seemed intolerable. He volunteered for special service in Somaliland, and after a year there—during which he held the responsible post of Chief Remount Officer—he was killed, whilst carrying despatches, after the battle of Jidballi.

In January, 1904, in the grey church at Gisburne,

my father read the lesson which he himself had chosen for the Memorial Service:

“Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceful fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed.”

Yet can there be a healing for those wounds that strike at the very mainspring of our being?

Again the sword thrust. In 1916 my brother Charles fell in the Gallipoli campaign. My father's courage never faltered, but he was one of those for whom war had changed “the aspect of the earth and the imagery of Heaven.”

In all my recollections he seems inseparable from those young spirits that had preceded him. To gather these memories together is an attempt to trace the outline of the clouds. No sooner does one memory arise than another more compelling one fills the horizon. The sky is full of them. I remember my father at so many different times and places, most vividly perhaps in this country of Craven where he belonged. Here men are slow to praise, and it is not easy to win their hearts, yet I know that in this favoured Ribble Valley, looking out towards the hills which he was fond of describing

as the Delectable Mountains of "Pilgrim's Progress," he will be "freshly remembered."

GISBURNE, 1926.

*An Extract from Stag-hunting Recollections.*¹

March 2, 1893. Posted from Swindon to Kitemore. Orr-Ewing put up hounds, horses, and men at the kennels; self, horses and Samways² at Kitemore. A very wet night. However, it had faired up by the time we started. Water out all over the place. Forded the redoubtable Rosey Brook on our way to the meet, a lively but not inviting stream. Van de Weyer, who, I suppose, has often been in it in old days, had prepared me for its peculiarities. This morning it was running bank-high and out over the banks. Took a mental but futile note of the look of the ford we crossed by. A great concourse at the turn-out. Foot-people for miles round. I was told many had started at 4 a.m. to get there. Waggons, musicianers and cock-shies. Might have been a country race-meeting by the look of things. Serried ranks of spectators, drawn up on neighbouring high grounds commanding the Rosey. We were all hospitably entertained by several capital farmers, living at Baulking; my host had very pretty daughters. Sloe gin, I think it was—very good, and fashionable

¹ From "The Queen's Hounds."

² His second horseman.

heliotrope colour. Found the Beaufort contingent all lined up, well-mounted, and ready for anything. Turned out Blackback, soon after twelve o'clock, amidst great and general confusion. Fast-asleep, who was very fresh, nearly threw me off by shying at the Aunt Sallies, just as I was going to address the foot-people on the situation. By the time I had recovered one stirrup and my hat, Blackback was out of the cart. After going two fields parallel to the brook, the hill-folk turned him down over the Rosey, which he crossed at some conventional willows—a nasty, flooded-looking place from where we were. The knowing ones now made off for the ford. However, the heliotrope kept a good many in the path of glory. The country being very deep and much water out, I gave him very little law—also on the principle of “For God’s sake start us, captain, before the whisky is out of us!”

The willows presented a scene of wild confusion. For a hundred yards each side of where the hounds crossed there was no reasonably fair take-off; the water being out over banks. I think all hunt-servants more or less got in. The fact is, we are more accustomed to boating than water-jumping. Mr. Harvey,¹ on Romeo, appeared to make a sort of duck and drake job of it, but did not part, greatly to his credit. The spluttering about was tremendous. Waterspouts filled the startled air. Everybody got

¹ The Queen’s huntsman.

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in. Charles Rich, according to his own account, climbed up one of the willows, after driving Moore's old grey that he was riding into the water up to his neck. I could not understand what he did next, but they got over somehow on the right side together, Charlie being wet up to his middle. "A d——d good performance, I call it," he said to me afterwards, which, as he weighs nineteen stone and is no climber, I think it was. Self, and Goldsmith on a well-bred white horse, and one or two more, rode up the brook. Goldsmith found a place with a little rise to it, good take-off and friendly bush. It was really no width anywhere, so we got over. Luckily, hounds had gone no pace meanwhile, and dragged along into the wrong country, of course, Lechlade way out of the Vale. The chase now led us to the Thames, running strong and high, only to be crossed by an unholy white spar-bridge near a weir. For once the men and hounds managed to get over first; then came Jim Rich and one or two of my Wiltshire friends, burning to distinguish themselves. Jim Rich's fool of a horse slipped and got cast on the bridge. Hind leg hitched through the spars; all passage blocked. A nice predicament for me and large and brilliant field! At first we gave the usual advice: "Take care! Look out! Mind where you're going to!" His brother, Charlie, again on the right side, urging him to shove the blooming horse into the river and let him swim for it. Jim

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seemed to think it a good joke; and if it had happened, it was as well it should happen to a Rich. They have a talent for rescues and emergencies, and are the sort of Deal fishermen of the Beaufort Hunt. Meanwhile, there we all were. After hoping against hope, I started *magnâ comitante catervâ* for the nearest bridge, four miles off. By this time I was riding William, and directly we got to the high road we set off at a strong pace. The high road had all the requisites—hard, wide, well-kept, and no grass siding to lure one off it. After galloping for fifteen bright minutes or so, we at last saw scarlet specks bobbing along about a mile away from us, half-right. Thank Heaven! hounds looked as if they were only just running. After some difficulty in persuading William of my good intentions—for he fancied by this time that he was taking the good news from Aix to Ghent—I turned out of the road, with Sturges on his white horse, and two of the second horsemen who had kept “follering on” with their usual dash; the rest of our party being beaten off by our superior disregard for our horses’ legs. We made straight for them over quite a nice line of hunting country. To my surprise, or rather not to my surprise, there were both Charlie and James Rich. Just as they were resolved on putting Charlie’s first counsel of perfection into effect, the animal had recovered the leg which was over the edge of the bridge. Not liking the look of the

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swirling, starchy water, he made a great effort, ably assisted by Charlie, who had hold of the root of his tail, the others meanwhile hauling at other coigns of vantage. Up to this point I think they had enjoyed this more than anything. We had to go back over the spar-bridge, and another horse did just the same thing. This time, the body-servant of a young lady, with a deep, silver-lace hatband, and the old drab Zouave gaiter. However, I was the right side, having exerted my prerogative of "Master, please!" and bidden Jim sternly to the rear. Charlie was, with difficulty, restrained from staying to see if he could not get this one in, and lustily roared the same advice to "Hatband." After dragging on a mile or two we had a long check, the floods and our ignorance of fords and bridges having played the dickens with us. Just as we were settling down into the doldrums of stag-hunting, a baker's cart brought up tidings of great joy. The baker had met the deer at some cross roads about two miles away. Harvey at once subjected him to a severe cross-examination as to his acquaintance with the look of a deer, perhaps remembering the story of the yokel who took a squirrel for the fox—"He wor but a little one, and he run up a tree." The baker stood it well, and offered to go with us as a sort of hostage, declaring he would chance it, which I suppose referred to the afternoon delivery.

Harvey, having satisfied himself of the baker's

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bona fides and natural history, started off at a hard-held gallop, blowing his horn. We wanted a little enlivening. The baker's roan pony leading us to such purpose that his loaves kept being jerked out from time to time. The baker must have forgotten the cross road, for when he came to it on he went. "Hold hard!" we all shouted, like one man, whilst I added the conventional: "You're all over the line!" On this he pulled up, so short that one wheel went into the ditch, and a large wicker basket flew out. However, it was all right, and that thick-shouldered Cardigan hit it off and took it down the road at least two hundred yards; none of the others seemed to own to it. We slotted him out of the road, and then hunted up to him rather nicely, over a fair country, through the park and young plantations of a gentleman's seat to a large piece of water (Buscott Reservoir), in which Blackback was swimming serenely about. In went the hounds, and I began to feel nervous. Bartlett's¹ fine tenor of entreaty and remonstrance now rent the air—it is always one of his great moments—though I never saw any effect produced on the hounds.

Harvey, meanwhile, blew his horn, trotting prominently up and down the bank, whilst all who knew how, cracked their whips. My Wiltshire friends were quite entranced with the spectacle, and declared with one accord they would have come miles

¹ For many years second whipper-in, retired on pension in 1894, and died the same year.

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to see it alone. Blackback, meanwhile, was veering unconcernedly about in the middle, very little in front of Notion, who, ever since she once got a nip at a deer in the Loddon, has much improved in her swimming. There was no boat-house, and I was beginning to be really uncomfortable, when, greatly to my surprise and satisfaction, out went Blackback on the far side. We ran into him in a deep ditch three or four fields farther on. Jim Rich had an arm round his neck in a trice, as if he had been at it all his life. There can have been only twenty or thirty people up with us at the end. All my Beaufort guests were there, I am glad to say. William had had quite enough of it. He tires himself from his implacable energy. I gruelled him at Farringdon, where I had some poached eggs. The Inn full of talkative and happy hunters. We all thought Joe Moore's horse was going to die when we got him into the stable. A stiff brew of hot ale and whisky was being administered when I left. It was as much as I could do to get William home the two or three miles I had to go to Kitemore. He dwelt like lead upon his own footsteps. We were both very glad to see Samways. Only a couple short, I think, and the men's horses did pretty well, in spite of their moderate performances at the Rosey Brook. They are not quite what they should be. Rocksavage out, and preserved a knowing air of mystery throughout. It is a pleasure to see him

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ride over a country. Ease and power combined. His horse always gets the best possible chance, and always seems to take it. He said he thought the hounds were fat. I dare say they are. They certainly are good ones to eat.

Not a very brilliant point, but we circumvented a lot of country, and I think the people of the district all enjoyed it. We were treated with great hospitality and kindness. Brown, who hunts the old Berkshire, and Orr-Ewing, the Master, had thought of everything possible to help us in every way.

IMPRESSIONS AND MEMORIES

CHAPTER I

MY FATHER AND MOTHER

Je suis né gentilhomme—selon moi j'ai profité du hasard de mon berceau. J'ai gardé cet amour plus ferme de la liberté qui appartient principalement à l'aristocratie dont la dernière heure est sonnée."—*Mémoires d'Outre Tombe*.

BORN on October 29, 1854, in the Hôtel de France at Fontainebleau, I can lay claim, by upbringing and inheritance on both sides, to the same advantages and prejudices as M. de Châteaubriand.

The habit of most biographers is to devote a longish chapter to predecessors and antecedents—one is lucky to get off with the proclivities of the third or fourth generation back: more often the attitude of an ancestor in the Civil Wars, or some fantastic tenure of lands held by the family prior to the dissolution of the monasteries, contributes a certain number of words to the tale agreed or insisted upon by the publisher. But surely the discovery and elaboration of antecedents, connexions or influences belong to biography. Some of this sort

of thing, especially in the domain of the influences of parents and home-life, cannot be dispensed with, but *cæteris paribus*, willing as I am at any time to act echo or chorus to Lord Melbourne's "D——n *cæteris paribus*," the writer of autobiography is "out" for his own doings and observations for what these may be worth; not the performances or the declarations of his forefathers.

However, I always read these pages with civility, and—on balance—there may be more to be said for than against introducing past generations, and the ways and looks and peculiarities of their day.

Here and there one may light upon odds and ends in a parentage and ancestry chapter, which detain and diversify the attention—odds and ends which make the reader think, apart from earlier collaterals resident in small places in inaccessible counties or from the yeoman beginnings of the first so-and-so entitled to bear arms by Visitation of Heralds; odds and ends which, mixed up with the past of an average or insignificant family, conduct or invite you up the grand staircase of History.

I have nothing of this sort to offer to my publishers and printers. As I have informed the House of Lords on more than one occasion, Oliver Cromwell stayed for a night or two at Gisburne. His troopers stabled their horses in the village church and broke the stained-glass windows, and the Listers of that day identified themselves in a cautious and

rational way with the cause of Parliament; but that does not take us very far or deeply into History.

"*Parce privatus nimium cavere*" I imagine, was the attitude of a good many gentlefolk families towards the troubles between the Crown and Parliament at Oxford and Westminster. Suffice it to say, that the ordered existence and interest of Listers on the same lands in Craven and in Lancashire is established by leases, agreements, indentures, accounts and salaries—a sinister but effectual way of establishing family history—in unbroken descent for a good many years from father to son. My own circumstances make the break in a longish tradition or persistence.

For the most part they seem to have been quiet folk: inclined, like Mr. Gibbon, to "the quiet air of delightful studies," devoting time and attention to their acres and local affairs, and to the strict preservation of their pocket-borough influence at Clitheroe, and also devoting time and attention, in reason, to the more active contrivances and contentments of country life. They farmed and planted, fished and hare-hunted, and always rode much about their business—on quality horses, too, as several seventeenth and eighteenth century pictures at Gisburne, and my great-grandfather's and grandfather's diaries attest. In our case these records were brightened up a little by some thin eighteenth-century marble-backed manuscript books, with care-

fully-written notes; some on cattle and sheep and sporting; others with eighteenth-century reflections on the subjects of the Gisburne collection of pictures and the characteristics of the masters, and on the laying out and the care of gardens. The latter were as good or better than would be written now; but the reflections on pictures and painters would find little favour.

Unluckily, these note-books, several pair of seasoned top-boots and leathers, and lots of other things not to be replaced, were burned to cinders in a considerable fire five-and-twenty years ago. It broke out at 3 o'clock on a December or January morning, in the London house we then occupied, deprived me of a day with the Queen's hounds in their best country, and indeed caused me much inconvenience.

Now for the bare particulars of my parentage: something, I suppose, should be done in this line. My father was educated at Mr. Faithfull's at Hatfield, Eton and Christ Church, Oxford. At Oxford he kept the drag with Lord Darnley and had one or two steeplechasers in training. He is finishing strongly on one of them in Winter's Christ Church drag pictures.¹ He then went into the Blues for a short time, and married in 1853.

¹ Don John, a grey cocktail. Ridden by James Mason, he won one or two good steeplechases. Don John was a beautiful hack: my mother rode him constantly. So did I, after getting out of my ponyhood. By this time he was an oldish horse and milk white.

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My mother was the youngest daughter of William Mure, of Caldwell, in Ayrshire, and of Laura, daughter of William Markham, of Becca, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. She was born at Caldwell, on May 7, 1833. The chalk drawing of her by Swinton seems to me like her as I first remember her—I remember her hair being done that way and its loops brought low down over her ears; but to the end of her life my mother retained the dignity and pureness of feature and the eloquent expression of her eyes which in her younger days entitled her, by general assent, to be considered a beautiful woman.

I attach so much value to my mother that I shall digress for a moment to her ancestry. The Mures of Caldwell are an ancient family, established of old time in Ayrshire at Caldwell and Rowallan. From the Caldwell papers, printed for the Maitland Club in 1854,¹ the Mures appear to have been independent and intractable, much engaged in the feuds and quarrels of the West Country, men of turbulent action and religious fervour—so much so that in 1666 the then Laird of Caldwell collected his tenantry in a troop of cavalry and joined the Covenanters. Discouraged, however, by the defeat of the Whig army at Pentland, they dispersed without coming into action. The Laird was attainted and fled to Holland by way of Ireland, and died there,

¹ Selections from the family papers (1496 to 1853) preserved at Caldwell.

as it is said, of grief and discontent at the calamities of his country. His estates were forfeited to General Dalzell of Binns till 1690, when they were restored to the family. "Lady" Caldwell, his wife, was imprisoned with her daughters for three years at Blackness Castle.

My grandfather Mure lived much both at Caldwell and in London, as he was member of Parliament for many years for Ayrshire. His leisure was devoted to travel in Greece and Italy, and to their literature. A Greek scholar of high repute, his stately book, "History of the Language and Literature of Ancient Greece," still enjoys esteem and authority.

"From her father," my sister Beatrix writes, "I think my mother inherited her love and perception of all that was beautiful and classical." That is true: the sense of the classical was her birthright. "Classical" was not the sort of word she would have meddled with: I do not know that in any student acceptance of the word she knew or followed the classics, but—as my sister says—her mind naturally obeyed the bent of the Classic.

I will round off these introductory observations with a citation from a letter of Dr. Whewell's (August, 1816) to his friend Mr. Morland. "This same human life," he writes, "is a strange business, in which we are led from step to step only by forming designs which are never to be executed and hopes

which are never to be fulfilled; in which we amuse ourselves and tire our neighbours by talking of intentions which perish as fast as they rise, and out of which we shall go, having purposed everything and done nothing, just when we were going to do what we should never do if we were to live for ever." How good that is; what lots of my neighbours have I "tired"! The letter was written from the University. Whewell was reading hard at the time, and I dare say he was not of age. The passage wears the complacent and conscious gloom of youth—writing at my full age, perhaps he would have written differently; yet upon retrospection, introspection, and circumspection, it provides a synopsis of my own transactions during a longish life, which may serve to prepare the reader for the poor results which have attended these operations. But before collecting and ordering my personal experiences of the essential fact—Life—let me enter a "caveat" lest such readers as these pages may attract or deserve should expect to find therein anything by way of fancy comment or reflection on the rival and essential fact—Death.

In a letter to Aubrey de Vere, Mrs. Sara Coleridge writes that she nowhere feels less near her departed friends than when visiting their tombs. I agree. Any such transaction is equally foreign to my tastes and inclination. I dislike the Burial Service of the Dead: "who being dead yet speaketh"

has always seemed to me a saying worthy not merely of acceptance but of use: to let the dead speak to the living in the recurring incidents of the everyday life they shared together at one time or other, in business and pleasures, in streets and country-side, in the look of skies and the outline of hills, in the commonplace and in the exceptional. In all these ways I am aware of the communion—not indeed of departed saints or of the spirits of just men made perfect, but of those I have known or liked or cared about at sundry times in divers places and in all sorts of ways—good, bad or indifferent; in the phrase of the day, those who have been “brought into my life.” This great company yet speaks: for with my good memory and my long life it is a large company. But trivial, or of its day, as much of this communication may be, there is something about it which shuts me up and demoralizes me. So, except in external ways, I shall perforce and for choice refrain from making good or analysing the heartfelt or the intimate.

Further, autobiography need not be encumbered with any such considerations or researches. Whatever else autobiography may be—whether it be dull or entertaining, important or insignificant, tame or wild, average or unusual—its quality and justification should be chiefly synoptic.

Desdemona came to love Othello for the dangers he had passed, for the ups and downs of his actual



LORD RIBBLESDALE AS AN INFANT, WITH HIS FATHER
AND MOTHER

From a painting by H. F. Schopin

experiences and vicissitudes; and it is in this way only that the writer of autobiography can hope or deserve to get on with his readers. It is true or even obvious that what one has been told, what one has read, the teachings of other times, the message of other folk—of those, perhaps, who, in Vaughan's line, "have all passed into a world of Light"—must perforce, in the jargon of to-day, "come in"; but in my view, and as far as may be, the main run and movement of autobiography should observe an egotism pushed to the verge of arrogance.¹

All else should be subordinated except—and the reservation is important—in so far as things heard or told have contributed tendency or influence to the "ego's" notions or habits. May I venture an example? As I have said above, Oliver Cromwell stayed a night or two with Mr. Lister at Gisburne. This fact—the mere fact of his staying there, of there being a Cromwell room in the house, unsupported as it is by any oral tradition of anything more definite about him—inclined me in quite early years to try to appreciate the merits of the case as between the King and Parliament.

This early inclination led to a certain amount of reading about the main action and personages of the Troubles of 1641 and the following years. Thus,

¹ When out of humour, George II's small stock of English totally failed him, and he used to express his indignation in the following form: "Got d—n me, who I am? Got d—n you, who you be." I noticed this, with pleasure, in Sir Walter Scott's *Journal*, March, 12, 1828, and it seems to apply to autobiography in a frugal and restricted sense.

had I anything to say distinct or picturesque about Cromwell and the Lister who entertained him, I should be glad to reanimate and reclothe my ancestor and work him into the text of this chapter. Unluckily—or perhaps luckily—with some exceptions, which I may refer to later, there is little actual to say about my predecessors. They entitle me to follow St. Paul's advice to avoid genealogies and foolish questions in this line.

CHAPTER II

EARLY DAYS

SOON after my brother Martin's birth, at Gisburne, in 1858, my father found himself in straitened circumstances. A financial crisis was accompanied by family complications of an agitating character. These led to a general engagement with pens, ink and paper. Nearly everybody connected with the principals—that is, with my father and mother—wrote letters to everybody else so connected. Much of this correspondence survives. Most of the letters are commonplace, if sensible; some are indignant, others are sorrowful, others insipid; but one or two of Lord John Russell's¹

¹ All through my early life my connection with the Russells was close and continuous. It came about in this way. *En premières nocés* Lord John Russell married my grandmother, in March, 1835. Her husband—my grandfather Ribblesdale—died in 1832. He married his cousin, Adelaide Lister, in 1826. She was the daughter of Thomas Lister, of Armitage Park, Staffordshire, and so sister of Mr. T. H. Lister, a cultivated man of good reputation in the world of letters, and author of "Granby" and other novels of vogue at the time, and which are still remembered.

There were four children of this marriage—my father and his three sisters—Adelaide, who married Mr. Maurice Drummond; Isabel, who married the Rev. Canon W. Warburton, Canon of Winchester; and Elizabeth, who married Sir W. H. Melvill—for many years Solicitor to the Inland Revenue. Lady John Russell (Lady Ribblesdale) died in 1838 and in 1841 Lord John married a second time, Lady Frances Elliot, daughter of Lord Minto.

When Lord John married Lady Ribblesdale, he also married a con-

and Lady Theresa Lewis's emerge agreeably from the welter of this collateral scrivening. Treading on delicate ground, these personages write with sane and cheerful perception of the frailty which flesh is heir to. But even so, the treatment of the subject on the whole is more copious and hortatory than would be devoted to a similar case in these more progressive and less leisured days. Solicitors are now called in from the first to suggest pros and cons, or to dictate what A should write to B.

My father's letters, take them all round, seem to me the best. His position was not defensible—this he recognizes to the full; they are written in excellent taste and English, and he steers clear of heroic, or indeed of any, promises or undertakings, excepting as to money arrangements, which, within his immediate and crippled possibilities, were generously conceived and scrupulously observed.

siderable family, whom he ever regarded and protected—with interest and great kindness—as his own. By Lady Ribblesdale, Lord John had two daughters; Georgiana, who married Archibald Peel, son of General Peel and nephew of Sir Robert Peel; and Victoria, who married the Rev. Henry Montagu Villiers—at that time Rector of Adisham—and afterwards Vicar of St. Paul's, Knightsbridge. Thus—in her turn—when Lady Frances Elliot married Lord John she found a family of six already provided.

So much—or too much—for the generation immediately preceding mine; but it explains how and why I was brought up to look upon Lord and Lady Russell as my actual grandparents. Had they been so in blood, my relations with Grandpapa John and Granny Fanny could not have been closer. Living, as we did, so much in France up till 1870, Pembroke Lodge became my second home. I constantly stayed there for part of my holidays and for my *excursions*; and if I did not profit by it, I was intelligent enough to recognize, and to value, the close familiarity with Lord and Lady Russell—two remarkable people.

All this worry led to my childish recollections of Gisburne being of the slenderest kind; such as I have are insignificant. However, at little more than three years old, not much in this line is to be expected, and I never saw Gisburne again till I was sixteen. By that time I had come elsewhere by such notions of the nature of things as I possessed—chiefly on the other side of the English Channel.

But still, I certainly remember the wild white cattle—not their make and shape, but the white blocky effect of the herd against the emerald grass of Craven. Again, I am watching my father and mother riding away from the front door under the low and waving branches of a sentinel beech-tree—it is still there. My mother's flowing habit is grey, she wears gauntlets, her horse is white, her hat is black with a loose wide brim; it has feathers—they are greenish black and ruffled by the wind: yet how to explain all this? At that age I cannot have been capable of a sense or discrimination of the fact of colour. The habit and the white horse and the gauntlets I saw later on at Fontainebleau, and perhaps the cock-plumed hat; yet I think not. My father's horse is dark-coloured and spirited, and the limestone chippings of the carriage-drive fly up from his feet; but, bar this general and filmish effect, I have no recollection of my mother's and father's looks at that time, except that I remember the firm coolness of her hands.

Then, and much more sustainedly distinct, there abide with me a donkey and paniers—one for me and one for my sister, Beatrix. Again, I do not remember her looks or ways, only a somnolent presence in the panier. With the donkey-boy I do better; he is ringing the dusky green peel of a holly stick in a way which enchants me. I can see that neatly-ringed stick now. It is a hot morning; our party is halted in sunshine, half in shade, under high chestnut trees at the foot of a short, steep, very stony hill.

Like the sentinel beech tree, the chestnuts are there still; the hill is steeper and stonier than ever, but the chestnuts seem to be fewer, and I do not think they flower so freely.

But I must get on. "His Lordship, having broken up his establishment,"¹ in the phrase of my mother's maid, Mrs. Weston, I saw next to nothing of my father for some years. An amicable separation

¹ It must have been all but tribal, the butler, valet and footman being brothers, and Benjamin, the tiger, a favourite nephew of Charles Curtis, the coachman. Posts were quickly found in Government offices—then largely recruited from gentlemen's servants—for two of the Johnson brothers, which they occupied with distinction for years. Charles Curtis was less fortunate, as he took to fast ways. All these particulars about our palmy days I learnt from Mrs. Weston. Everything else was given up. The London house in Eaton Place was got rid of. Mr. James Mason took back some high-class horses my father had intended to hunt from Melton, on the expensive terms usual in such cases. My mother's bay clean-bred carriage horses and his own cab horse—a blue roan with black points and a warm tan muzzle—were sold. A friend of his bought the blue roan and the cab, and took on Benjamin—said to be the smallest and smartest of his kind in London—and Gisburne and its then extensive sporting and fishing rights were let to a good tenant for a term of years.

on terms having been arranged, the troubled waters subsided. Friends and relations on both sides put their pens and their views away.

But in 1862, his affairs not having improved—rents not inclining to rise, the increasing demands of education, and all that is understood by the term “growing children” (our feet, according to my father, grew alarmingly)—a fresh start was agreed to, upon the basis of a common home and purse abroad.

Up till then my mother and we children—my sister Beatrix, my brother Martin and myself—had lived in and about London in small furnished houses, in Chesham Street and Lowndes Street, and at Tunbridge Wells and Hampstead and Richmond, places much frequented by homeless or embarrassed gentlefolk. Thus, during an eager and impressionable time, I depended entirely on my mother for the things a child picks up outside the schoolroom routine. In my case, this began when I was about six years old, under the auspices of a youthful but not erudite French governess. I liked my lessons and took pains; indeed, I have often since regretted the lack of the *nitor in adversum* of those early days, but the line of least resistance quickly became my snare and got dominion over me.

Out of doors I wanted to learn to ride and to drive and to shoot and to fish, all the sort of things little boys get out of elder brothers or fathers or

gamekeepers or stablemen. I referred for precept and practice to my mother. Why could I not do this or that, like boys in the books she read to me about? But such experiences were not easy to come by at Hampstead and Tunbridge Wells, the wild sports of Frognaal and Calverley Park being, to quote Lord Russell's epigram, "conspicuous by their absence." However, the ostler of a livery-yard opposite Greena Villa at Richmond, which we occupied for a time, grounded me in the rudiments of his occupation, and some of the better-disposed fly-men allowed me to drive (I always sat on the box) when an open landau, hired from the aforesaid livery-yard opposite, conveyed my mother to visit the Russells at Pembroke Lodge, or folk of her acquaintance beyond a walking distance.

As regards the fishing and riding, my mother, extenuated no doubt by my insistence, rose to the occasion. Thus it was at Hampstead, under her auspices, that I took my very first ride. After much confabulation with our greengrocer, it was arranged for me to make a beginning on his vegetable-cart pony, a nice, little, roundabout chestnut, with a pretty head and long tail. The greengrocer's boy was to act as a sort of running squire; so one afternoon, after the pony and boy had finished the round of their clients, a start was made in the lower part of the Heath to the north of the Pond, where

there was then a good extent of rough grass,¹ now tamed and domesticated by the London County Council. All went well at first, but, tempted by progress, a canter which outpaced my running footman, and a small grip resulted in a crowner. I landed over the pony's head with unexpected force on a peculiar place—my thumb—which was sprained and had to be kept in lavender for three or four days. After this mischance—possibly with my full assent—riding was discontinued; for one thing, the greengrocer's saddle left much to be desired, and my mother, who had ridden all her life, though not in the way ladies rode a little later on, to hounds, was anxious that I should from the first get the advantages of seat and "form" which only a good saddle affords. Little boys should always be started on animals with good shoulders and a saddle that fits and flattens the shoulders. They unconsciously, then, learn to sit in the right place, and, in Sir Richard Sutton's phrase, "to hang a good leg."

Again, it was under my mother's auspices that I fished for the first time. The difficulty here was water. We were then living at Tunbridge Wells,

¹ My cousin, Miss Harriette Lister (niece of the author of "Granby"), reminds me of our catching between us a "Clouded Yellow"—I suppose *Colias edusa*—on this part of the Heath, just about the time of this adventure. The lines of Wordsworth seem applicable:

"A very hunter did I rush
Upon the prey with leaps and springs,
I followed it from bush to bush."

I do not fancy "Clouded Yellows" could be treated in this way on Hampstead Heath now.

we had no friends to give us the liberties of their ornamental waters, and river fishing was not in practical politics. Little boys of six or seven can only manage ponds and float-fishing.

However, a sullen little pond in a wood was discovered, about a mile from our house, in Calverley Park—the wild cherry-trees were in full flower, I remember—and with rather rough-and-ready home-made equipment we made our attempt. We got a challenging bite at once—on paste—and my mother, a perch and brown-trout fisher of good ability in her girlhood, told me when to strike. I whipped out, right over my head, a large newt. Luckily, he unhooked himself; we neither of us liked his sinister looks, his spotted sides and creamy belly, and we assisted him with her parasol to wriggle over the few yards of *terra firma* into the pond. This he accomplished with speed and agility.

It seems to me now that I could always read and write and draw and speak French. No doubt all this was done only after a fashion. But I recall neither tears nor the yoke of taking pains, except occasional gusts of a Shelley-like dejection at drawing failures, which agitate and disappoint most youthful, adult, and elderly amateurs; though I never suffered from these as acutely as my boy Charles Lister did at the same sort of age. If things did not go well—and as my subjects were mostly his-

torical and often ambitious this frequently happened—I explained the failure by an airy “I am not in the humour”; but Charles would persevere even on a *main malheureuse* day, and go to bed in distress but unbeaten.

But great changes were at hand—changes not merely of conditions, but of sky and country, unimaginable until they actually took shape.

We were then living at Hampstead, in Oakhill Terrace, in a typical semi-detached villa—one of five or six. The Oakhill Terrace precincts were entered by gateways at either end from the cheerful highroad, alas! only too discreetly contained by a clipped and prosperous laurel barrage.

My schoolroom faced this laurel obstacle to vision—only a bare third of the *va et vient* was to be seen from the high, plate-glass window at which I was allowed to do my lessons.

These lessons were carried on in the afternoon under the somewhat inattentive eye of Mademoiselle Basset, my first and only governess, recently imported from Passy. She was young, kind, sentimental about a curate, and invariably immersed in some French romance of the Dumas or Victor Hugo complexion.

Well, one hot afternoon, of the gracious quality as to sunshine and temperature which summer-time occasionally pulls out for this island, my studies were agreeably interrupted by the apparition of

Mr. Archibald Peel¹ (the husband of my father's half-sister, Lady Georgiana Russell) on his black hack; its coat shone like satin or the faces of the Blest. He wore a tall white hat, an ample and carefully tied blue bird's-eye cravat, light grey overalls tightly strapped over well-cleaned Wellingtons, and the close-fitting, long, swallow-tailish coat affected by the equestrian dandies of those days.²

My uncle often rode over from Marble Hill or London, and this afternoon I was allowed, as usual, to leave my lessons and to go and help to put up the black mare—I forget her name and breeding—at a neighbouring yard. But it turned out that my uncle had come this time as an ambassador plenipotentiary. The previous visits had no doubt been in the nature of *pourparlers*. Anyhow, my mother—with whom I was, even in those early years, on confidential terms as to plans, resources and possibilities—told me that same evening that Oakhill Terrace was to be evacuated at once, and that we were all to live together again abroad. As soon as possible we were to start for Fontainebleau, where a settled home was to be established.

¹ As a rider and as a friend of Mr. Alfred Tennyson's, some of whose poems I already admired, my uncle Archy Peel stood high in my estimation.

² Lord Spencer, an all-the-year-round rider, stuck to the same cut of coat and a tall hat long after more easy-going attire came into fashion in Rotten Row.

EARLY DAYS

My brother and sister and Mademoiselle Basset were much excited—so was I; so was Mrs. Weston, who shed a good many tears. My mother was relieved when both Mrs. Weston and our nurse, Rachel Kemp, declared their intentions of following our fortunes to France.

CHAPTER III

THE EXODUS ABROAD

LIVING abroad for a bit was a method of reconstruction often adopted in those days by families and single gentlemen who had outrun the constable, or, in Burton's phrase, had galloped themselves out of their fortunes—Beau Brummel, Mr. Mytton and "Nimrod" (Mr. Apperley) all spent much enforced time on the French coast; and in moods of not uncheerful financial depression—excited by the recurrent wardrobe, footgear and medical requirements of his family—my father often declared that we too should certainly end our days at Boulogne.

No doubt a good deal may be urged on economic grounds for this living abroad—simpler habits and modes of life; curtailment perforce of amusements, such as shooting and hunting; *café-au-lait* and *tartines* instead of eggs and bacon and the generous alternations of the Englishman's breakfast-table; fewer servants, who were credited with a liking for long hours, low wages, and a vegetable diet; comparative immunity from "to account rendered" communications or worse things; no entertaining; wood instead of coal fires; and the touching notion that continental

winters are always so dry as to be seldom cold. On the other hand, the English family abroad in many cases—certainly in ours—remains much the same, when theory is converted into practice, as the English family at home. In their manners and customs English families continue “to sing the song of the Lord in a strange land.”

My mother and our three or four English servants believed in English hours and ways, in beef and mutton and bacon and marmalade and meat three times a day, and paid little deference to salads or *maigre* soups. So far from that, our *pot-au-feu* was of the most forcible character in soups, and often intensified by the addition of some elderly cock or broody hen which Louis (our cook) had bought a bargain in the market—a piece of good fortune immediately communicated to my father¹ if he happened to be at home. But, to my regret, my mother thought the stringy *bouilli* from the *pot-au-feu* excellent with *cornichons*, and the accounts I used to bring back from an occasional noonday meal with M. Comte and his family (a well-known artist of that time, whose studio I attended intermittently as a disciple) of ingeniously accommodated veal, of *flageolets* and cold *charcuterie*, twangy cheese, and *saucisson-de-Lyon* found little favour at home; and none at all with Mrs. Weston, my mother’s maid, or Rachel and Maria,

¹ My father also affirmed that a young cook was an advantageous addition to *pot-au-feu*—after a visit to a small country gentleman in the Sologne.

our nursery attendants. Indeed, with the latter they had the opposite effect, and evoked melancholy recollections of roast beef, roly-poly, apple tarts, and so on.

But this is by the way. We left London in very hot weather—end of July or August—and, having lived hitherto in the small way I have described, we three children—my sister Beatrix, my brother Martin and I—were agreeably astonished at the effortless state in which we travelled, and at the Open Sesame effects of the florins and francs freely distributed by my father, and by Boucher's purchases of greengages and chocolate, as we proceeded on our way.

My father had directed the exodus from Newmarket, amid the distractions of the Second July Meeting quite in the manner of Moses.

His directions—I have the letter before me—to meet him with staves in our hands and our loins girded under the clock of Charing Cross station at an appointed and early hour were carried out according to plan. He greeted us amiably (he had won his money at Newmarket), although the assembly of three children, a governess, three servants and their paraphernalia—all strangers to him—must have brought him face to face with the responsibilities of reunion. But those that live by the river must make friends with the crocodile—and he quickly identified himself with the confusion and discomforts of a *déménagement en gros*. He was accompanied by two

THE EXODUS ABROAD

pretty lady pugs—Lola and Dolly—with which we quickly made friends.

I shall have something to say of our more personal intercourse later on, but, to quote Gibbon on his own father (November 10, 1770), "his graceful person, polite address, gentle manners and unaffected cheerfulness recommended him to the favour of every company." We adopted, as quickly as puppies, a vested interest in all he said or did, and I, more especially perhaps, installed him as my *arbiter elegantium*. Indeed, we were much delighted at the discovery of so agreeable a personage.

On the eve of our departure we had been formally introduced at the Grosvenor Hotel to M. Boucher, our courier. Boucher had been my parents' courier on one or two other occasions—their wedding-tour and one, when they travelled by road in Italy in their own carriage with an imperial and a dicky. Thus my mother and he were old friends, and he declared himself touched as well as pleased at the new turn of affairs, and at finding himself in the bosom, as it were, of a respected patron's family. Another new acquaintance we now made was that of Antoine, my father's French valet.

It was hottish weather, and Antoine wore a shiny black alpaca coat, white trousers, and a straw hat of novel style, which much impressed us. Antoine did not play any prominent part on the journey, but he did stay with us long; his dismissal was un-

doubtedly hastened by the careless packing of my father's bottle of tonic, of a strongly coloured and astringent brand, amongst his clean linen. English families always travelled with their tonics and prescriptions. Boucher, on the other hand, besides dealing with porters, guards, and even policemen, with an authority which filled us children with pride and confidence, visited our compartment at every stop to assure my mother of a truceless devotion to the baggage and our other interests. "Je surveille tout," or as a variation, "Il faut tout surveiller." Nor was this surveillance confined to the baggage, for having regained his own carriage, he hung far out of the window with his eyes earnestly fixed on the situation of ours for some time after the train had cleared the stations, and in this way, as I did the same, we were able to exchange long glances of mutual confidence and encouragement.

It was the fashion of those days for English people who had been brought up in a certain way to travel with couriers; yet even then their day was passing, and I do not think Boucher got much to do. His headquarters were at the Hôtel Westminster, in the Rue de la Paix, where, between 1862 and 1870, we stayed a good deal—once for a whole winter. Here, when *en disponibilité*, he occupied, with one or two *confrères*, a roomy and airy attic, and kept a number of canaries. Thus, from time to time, we met, and he used to propose to me—with

my mother's approval—a promenade *en ville*. We both preferred the streets to the *bourgeoisie* of the Tuilleries gardens or the fashionables and nursery maids of the Champs Elysées. When we got tired of walking, which we quickly did, for Boucher was a fat man with small, tightly-shod feet, we rested at a café on one or other of the Grands Boulevards. Boucher would then order a *bock* or an absinthe, and would offer me a *sirop*. There we sat for the most part in a contented silence, watching the slow-moving current on the pavement.

But the narrative of our exodus must now close, and the scene be transferred to Fontainebleau.

Yet, before leaving Paris, let me record an Experience I there sustained—a palpable experience, and so deserving of a capital "E." We stayed on our first arrival under Boucher's care, as related, for two or three days in Paris at a Rue de Rivoli hotel—Meurice's or the Windsor—*au premier*, our form being still well maintained; and we came in for the Emperor's Fête in glorious weather.

To this day, and its occurrences, I ascribe my first defined apprehension of colour and processional music. I can remember nothing before this of their joint effect in my childish philosophy.

The Cent Gardes, in cerulean and cuirasses, their handsome horses pacing the streets harmoniously to what seemed the eternal strains of "Partant pour la Syrie"—the tune which Queen Victoria in one

of her letters finds dismal ("exceedingly" dismal, if I remember aright); and then the fixed blue of the sky overhead—a blue peculiar to France, and as different in its body and intensity from the fugitive and airy blues of, say, the Outer Islands or the Cumberland Fells, as can be imagined. This blue, from its body, always looks to me as if it had been painted over black, and, to repeat myself, is peculiar to France or parts of France, and, perhaps, also to Spain. Cross the Straits from Gibraltar to Tangier, and you lose it again; nor do you get it in the Pyrenees. But enough—or too much—of these lucubrations on the observed but unimportant. But whence and how comes this definite apprehension of colour identity into the arena and practice of a child's everyday outward and inward eye? However, as I am neither biological nor scientific nor zoological, I do not pause for a reply.

At that time the Emperor's position—often equivocal, at times precarious—was apparently assured. The Empress's beauty was at its zenith; the Prince Imperial was the adopted child of France. Things were well done under the Empire, and the French like a *point de mire*. This was supplied by the Court of the Tuilleries and by their sojourns at Fontainebleau and Compiègne. Yet—in a sense—the blare and splendour of that afternoon were typical of the dynasty I was to see come to grief in 1870.

CHAPTER IV

FONTAINEBLEAU

Dieu, que le son du cor est triste au fond du bois!

IN one of his agreeable and adroit essays¹ on the minor constellations his writings have done so much for, Sir Edmund Gosse has something to say of the atmosphere of melancholy this line of Alfred de Vigny at once evokes.

I came across this particular "Profile" comparatively recently, years upon years after the days of my own sojournings at Fontainebleau; yet at this distance of time my thoughts travel back easily and often to those adolescent years. From time to time I recall and repicture the long geometrical alleys, receding in a vain perspective, peculiar to forests and great woodlands, towards some logical and vacant *carrefour*; the sad-coloured, waterless sands and rocks, the stretches of lifeless heather, the birdless and unsunned high wood (*une forêt morte*—so a French Master of Hounds lately described it to me)—grave, silent, sombre, eloquent of warning rather than encouragement.

It is true that, without going so far as Gilbert

¹ *French Profiles.*

White of Selborne, who held church spires to be necessary ingredients of a pleasing landscape, I have the Crome and Constable liking for horizons and plenty of room for sky. Thus forests and mountains, except as vague backgrounds, have never been to my taste. Yet, apart from these preferences, Alfred de Vigny's lines and the word "Fontainebleau" restore to me unforgotten things and companions; unforgotten, if lost or perished, influences; unforgotten, if abandoned, hopes and fears. But all these things I propose to eschew. A day that is dead is at best a trite and ineffectual theme; its recollections are not of necessity graceful or tender; indeed, with average folk they may often be uncouth or regrettable. It is easy "to sorrow for that troop as it returns, through the waste wilderness, with empty arms."

Anyhow, on our arrival at Fontainebleau, bathed in midsummer, after the journey I have just described, and having regard to my mood at the time, all such meditations are out of place.

I had not ridden since the episode of Hampstead Heath upon the greengrocer's pony already described, so my riding and hunting education began in France.

My first pony was black, a mare called Mignonne. I know not how she was bred, but her shoulders were good enough to permit of her kicking high. Our groom, who used also to wax the parquet floors,

and later on wait at table, was an ex-dragoon, an Alsatian.

If the day was cold, clear and sunny, he always warned me that Mignonne might be *gaie*. He was right about this; I was often kicked off. My father did not care much about forest hunting. "One fool follows another," he used to say; so he seldom came out, and went home early. Thus my education in venery was left to Isidore, who prided himself on a complete knowledge of its martial discipline and excellent mysteries. We had great fun together. Isidore was not an over-confident rider, but in a shiny-peaked cap, alpaca coat, white duck trousers and straps, which was his hunting costume on sunny spring days, he circumvented an academy canter down an alley as well as his neighbours.

When I first went to school in '64, Mignonne was sold, but I was soon promoted to independence on thoroughbred horses just out of training—on the thoroughbred horses my father preferred as hacks. Sometimes I hired. The Fontainebleau hirelings were moderate animals and ill-done, but I liked one, a reputed *Irlandais*, held in high esteem and request, and another of the now scarce colour known as *porcelaine*, a creamy white with black spots and flecks and a pink nose.

This was a well-shaped self-advertising animal and made a great show. Louis XIV, who rode pied chargers, would have looked famous on him,

and Louthembourg or Van der Meulen would have selected him as a model. There was plenty of hunting. The Imperial *Vénerie* hunted the stag, and Messieurs Aguado hustled the boar about.

Baron Lambert, an adherent of Napoleon in his days of exile, was *Sous Veneur* under Count Edgar Ney, and I looked up to him as one upon the pinnacle of human greatness; he invited me sometimes to the *Vénerie*, and took me for rides on his horses; he also gave me a beautiful Swaine and Adeney cutting whip. Baron Lambert was a character and a wit. Lord Byron would never speak French, as he declined to speak it like a German waiter, but the Baron had no such fastidiousness about his English—he spoke it as freely and graphically as any stud-groom in Melton, and could slur the *b* in “horse” and “hundred” and shunt the *g* in “hunting” with the refined subtlety of our own sporting aristocracy. A great friend of my father’s at this time, the Marquis Omère Talon, always dressed like an English stud-groom and trimmed his side-whiskers in this style. On one occasion he happened to be standing outside a London club when somebody rode up, got off quickly, and gave him a shilling to hold his horse. Talon was said to look upon this with satisfaction, as a great tribute to his horsey English appearance!

The Emperor seldom hunted at Fontainebleau. His hunting notions and sympathies were English; he liked the thing to go; so long as hounds ran on,

he winked at their having changed their deer, and paid no attention to the moralities. Thus, he would often gallop like steam for a few minutes along the alleys just as they came—the tuneful operations of the chase being a matter of no importance—then, relinquishing all interest in the proceedings, he would relapse into silence, and sometimes, but rarely, into conversation with somebody he liked talking to.

On one occasion he was much annoyed at things having gone wrong, and he sent for Baron Lambert. “If this should happen again,” he told the Baron in my father’s hearing, “*je rase la vénerie d’un trait de plume.*” I remember his seat on horseback well: right down and into his horse with longish stirrups; of course, as everybody knows, he rode exceedingly well to hounds over here and on screws. On one occasion he showed the whole of the Queen’s field the way, including Charles Davis, for the first three miles from Pole Hill, in the best of the Harrow country. I do not suppose Napoleon III was as good a school rider as the Prince Imperial, whose accomplished horsemanship I also remember when serving with the Royal Artillery at Woolwich.

The hounds were wanting in music, but the men did their best to make up for the deficiency. There was one particular *piqueur* whom we held in high esteem and admired for the stirring way in which he wound his horn at full gallop. Monsieur Eugène, as Isidore and I always called him in conversation

(we never dared speak to him), would come through the horsemen and carriages in a crowded *carrefour* standing up in his stirrups and leaning over to the off-side until the bell of his horn was on the level of his right stirrup. I think Monsieur Eugène seldom knew where he was going, but we all used to gallop after him.

“Rendez la main, Monsieur Thomas: voilà Monsieur Eugène qui sonne,” Isidore used then to say, getting his own horse well on the bit and giving him the full benefit of a muscular calf.

The war of 1870 drove us away from Fontainebleau in a hurry. A family of nine souls, we only just got through Paris in time. Cattle were being driven into the quickly-fortified *enceinte*, and were grazing in the ditches and on the slopes of the glacis. We drove out from the Hôtel Westminster to the Etoile to see all this.

My father did not go with us: he still hoped something might turn up, and he had two valuable horses he wished to save. My mother's diary (she was by this time in England) records: “Had a letter from Ribblesdale; no particular news, except his being surrounded by Prussians.” Though this might not be “particular news,” it was evidently high time to make a move, so he set out on a clean-bred and fractious chestnut mare, named Catalina, to make his way to the coast. Isidore accompanied him on Flambeau, a four-year-old I often rode. This horse

had managed to win him a good match at Chantilly or Longchamps. They got safely to Le Havre.

It was lovely weather and both horses had good legs and feet, so they enjoyed it. Once the riders were all but shot at, as spies, from behind a tree, but loud explanations were forthcoming from the startled Isidore.

Flambeau, after this chequered career, was raffled for at a bazaar in aid of an organ for Gisburne Church.

By the light of many recent experiences of German occupation, this letter, written on my father's return to Fontainebleau, and dated March 15, 1871, deserves to be quoted. He writes: "I arrived yesterday; the Prussians are still in the town. I have got an officer and two men in our house. Isidore has taken great care of everything and there is very little damage done. At least half my cellar is left, but they have eaten and drunk at my expense all the winter. I hear, at present, of no great outrage that they have committed."

CHAPTER V

MY FATHER AND THE TURF

And pray, what is a gentleman
Without his recreations?

—*Old Song.*

RACING, and racing on a largish scale, had brought about the straitened circumstances alluded to in a preceding chapter.

This adventure dated from 1851. Lord John Russell felt "anxiety" at his step-son's purchase of General Peel's stud, horses in training, mares, foals, stallions, clothing—all there was to be had—and wrote to warn, if not remonstrate. My father's reply, though not of a kind likely to be preferred by a parent and guardian, found favour. Lord John approved its style, its Horace and its independence.¹

Let me refer to his trainer for the sequel: "I had the pleasure," says Mr. William Day,² "of training for some years for Lord Ribblesdale until lack

¹ My father wrote: "Every man, say I, his own *métier*. We are all good for something, as your friend Horace justly remarks to Mæcenas in his first ode, '*Sunt quos curriculo pulverem Olympicum,*' and again, '*Hunc si nobilium turba Quiritium,*' etc. We of the nineteenth century remain the same as in Horace's time—I take as much interest in a race in which I have a horse running as you in the issue of an election for a Government borough."

² "Turf Celebrities I Have Known," by W. Day, of Woodyates.

of funds compelled him to give up his racing. This abandonment," Mr. Day goes on to say, "was the more to be regretted as he (Lord Ribblesdale) was an enthusiastic admirer and a well-wisher of the sport, but not being rich, raced with a view to increasing his income, and always in the most honourable way." Elsewhere he begins a paragraph: "His Lordship was a heavy bettor," and gives instances of his performances, notably of a large operation in this line which came off in defiance of the counsels of both his trainer and jockey; and there are other instances of my father's invariable deference to his own opinions on racing, handicapping, claret and other matters.¹

Take this, for instance. The occasion is the debut of the well-named Happy Land—by Jericho out of Glee. My father bought him of W. Day for £1,000 and half his winnings. The scene is Salisbury race-course—a two-year-old race, the Glee colt first favourite. Steel laid him the first bet that was made on the race—five monkeys to four against—and finished by taking seven to four in hundreds from Lord Ribblesdale that he would not win. Such was his infatuation to bet with Steel that he took about one-third less odds than he could have got

¹ Some years ago—a good many now—I rode across Salisbury Plain from Wilton to Alvediston, where Mr. Day was living in narrow and solitary retirement. He had long ago lost his vogue and reputation as a trainer. There was a little stabling attached, swept and garnished, but vacant.

from twenty other men in the ring as good as the Leviathan.

But enough of these far-off things—ought they to find any place in these pages? After all, they are merely vicarious experiences on hearsay evidence. But, as a little boy, race-horses and jockeys, weights and pedigrees, colours and courses, accompanied my daily rides and occupied my thoughts. They became vitalized familiars. I would ask my father endless questions about Happy Land and Promised Land, St. Giles and the Nabob and Dulcamara, their looks and actions and peculiarities; about Woodyates and Newmarket and Ascot and Brighton and Goodwood; about Adams and James Goater and Fordham and William Day, and what they looked like. He must have got very tired of the same questions; nor was he, in a general way, communicative about other and more prosperous days. Thus, often at Fontainebleau we would ride long kilometres in the grey sand alleys, “under the shade of melancholy boughs,” in friendly silence. But sometimes he would be different and would investigate and review disappointments and successes, with illustrations, as it were. Not only that, he would indulge in hope. In racing he was long hope’s prisoner, the bondsman of “*cette éternelle espérance qui ment si bien qu’on la croît toujours*” which leads many people into difficulties in many directions; but which, on the whole, the world could not get on without.

Now and again great things were expected of the horse or two he had in training at Maisons Lafitte; now and again he would win his money over a match—matches were still fashionable. Yet somehow or other these reviews of his vicissitudes cooled or put me off racing: I began to feel racing to be a sort of Minotaur or Frankenstein's monster.¹

In 1851 he had sold his sporting estate of Malham, its tarn, and many acres of moorland and high limestone pastures, to Mr. Walter Morrison. In clear weather the limestone outcrop and the bold outline of Penyghent are in full view of the North Lawn at Gisburne, ten or twelve miles away as the crow flies. My father valued its distinctive peculiarities of wildness and remoteness and botany and bird-life. He seldom acknowledged and never complained of the results of his "mistakes"—a favourite word of his; yet only the other day I came across an undated letter of his from Gisburne to my mother at Fontainebleau, telling her of a most lovely

¹ Indeed, had I known at the time the distressing vicissitudes of the agreeable animals aforesaid, or, rather, the cumulative effect of their performances on the fortune of the Lister family, I would have suggested something like the text in Joel "That which the palmer worm hath left, hath the locust eaten." But still, we all followed his racing to some extent. In a letter of mine from Harrow, which I came across lately, the failure of Elysium to catch the judge's eye evokes my suitable sympathy. My sister remembers sharing his satisfaction whenever a heavy shower appeared at racing time. "Ah," he said, "this will suit Lady Elizabeth"—he had backed her well. It came off and my sister received a blue enamel watch out of his winnings. Indeed, when he won his money, he recognized his luck by little gifts. Even my mother, whose diary was most frugal, occasionally enters the name of the winner.

day he had spent at Malham. It is a sad letter: "Among my numerous heartaches Malham must always count for one."¹

However, again to quote Mr. Day, the sale of Malham had given my father money to play with, and it is but right to say he paid off a mortgage with the proceeds.²

As I grew, so I changed. There were other causes: for one thing, when I went to Harrow I saw less of my father—he was seldom at home, so we lost our early and active intimacy. Thus my vested interest in the failures and successes of "Black and orange sleeves, black cap" waned. Then our Easter holidays at Petworth: its hunting-stables and kennels; a schoolboy day or two with Sir Watkin Wynne's foxhounds in Wales and with Mr. Longman's harriers round about Frimley and Farn-

¹ When, to pay off family charges, we decided to sell our best picture, one of my great grandfather in Eton Montem dress, a graceful full-length by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the first important picture he painted after settling in London, we felt the same heartache—

This is how my wife describes the departure:

"I felt a pang of grief, when I saw the poor dear being walked down the stairs with great difficulty and felt what shadows we were in comparison to him. He will go on living for ever, when we are crumbling, and yet the shadows turn him out of his own home."

² I was fond of asking questions about Gisburne and Malham, but I could get very little out of him about either. He made light of both and of his enforced absence from his territories. All I remember about Malham is the strange accomplishment of his yeoman-born agent—one Cromdale. It consisted in tackling any ferocious bull in the countryside. The bull having been persuaded into some small croft—i.e. walled enclosure—Cromdale would strip himself naked and would invariably reduce the animal to submission.



SIR HENRY IRVING AS TRIPLET IN
"MASKS AND FACES"

From a water-colour sketch by Lord Ribblesdale

1844

1845

1846

1847

1848

borough; Whyte-Melville's novels, especially "Market Harborough"—all these gave new direction to my mind; to the more personal possibilities of hunters and of riding to hounds, even on screws; to the circumstances and environment of hunting: the empty silence of the winter landscape; the long horizons; the wide, fitful skies, not circumscribed or molested by grand stands and paddock enclosures, undisturbed by the "*turba Quiritium*" who attend race-meetings. In mind, body and estate, the cry of hounds, the action and courage and companionship of a well-bred horse, became in fancy my joys and requisites. So they have endured. I am as attached to hunting as ever.

Thanks to the racing, as a family we were in some ways "diminished and brought low."

M. Taine observes somewhere—nobody must expect verifications of my allusions: nine times out of ten I should not know where or how to make them good—that *bien élevé* people of the time which immediately preceded or included his earlier writings never talked about their ailments or their misfortunes—it was held to be bad taste so to do.

I question the truth of this appreciation, but it is to my father's, and more especially to my mother's, credit that as children we never suffered from domestic repinings or recriminations on the loss of income and the want of ready money. We were all quite aware of both; the contingent consequences of both were

in constant evidence, but they were made light of—sometimes even amusingly.¹

Thus we—my brother and sister and I—were spared any of the ostentation of narrowed means, which is quite as liable to vulgarity of treatment as riches.

¹ After Antoine's dismissal, my father's groom, Isidore, valeted him and ironed *The Times*, and later on waited upon us at dinner—or at all events helped. My father's *mot* that he preferred a groom in the chambers to a groom of the chambers was thought excellent.

CHAPTER VI

SOME SERMONS

AFTER the second exodus from Fontainebleau, we inhabited for a year or two the breezy heights of Mount Ephraim at Tunbridge Wells. For most of this time I was at a private tutor's, and my brother Martin was well up in the school at Cheltenham. When we were all at home for our holidays we were—as a family—pretty good churchgoers. We listened to and confirmed the reading of the Lessons, had our favourites in the Liturgy and the Collects, and paid close attention—for purposes of discussion at luncheon—to the sermon. In those days it was still the way for families, and even of single gentlemen, to attend morning church; and the habit survived, if it did not flourish, well into the 'seventies. It was also the fashion to allot to the pulpit a brief authority, but an authority liable, indeed, to question, investigation, and a close surveillance. The better to do this, one fixed one's eyes on pulpit and preacher. I still watch a preacher intently, and experience a sense of ghostly discomfort if I cannot see all that is going on at a favour-

able angle, if not face to face. In this connexion, my father was more attentive and less impatient than my mother. "How I tire of Church services," she writes one Sunday in her diary; and she was a very much better judge, to quote Dr. Newman, of "truth necessary, not truth recondite or rare." He liked the niceties of the subject, and was always discovering some lack of originality or frailty of logic in the pulpit treatment of good opportunities.

I must confess that some of these discoveries were often far-fetched: old-fashioned, too, and overlaid with the queer Public School and University divinity of his younger days.

My father was fond of his Bible and knew it well, and read it without compunction. I have it still. The few fly-leaves are employed indifferently for old-fashioned commentaries of that day and the handicapping of long-forgotten horses.

Thus, in faint pencil, we find that "the meaning of Capernaum is *vicus consolationis*," "Galilee means divisions: the people of Galilee were more inclined to receive our Saviour because they were not so perverted by Jewish custom," and so on.

Cheek by jowl with information of this kind is the betting on Surplice's Derby. Surplice started at 5 to 4, equal favourite with Glendower. He notes: "The crack went ahead and won by four lengths."

But to return to Tunbridge Wells: we listened, *en famille*, not perhaps as experts, but as connoisseurs.¹

I spoke just now of my father's critical aptitudes. Thus, by way of illustration, I remember being laid up by pleurisy at Harrow the whole of one Christmas holiday; nor can I ever forget the kindness of my house-master, Mr. Watson, and his wife, who took me into their own house. My mother was not well and could not come over from Fontainebleau, so my father came to visit and spend Christmas Day with me. On his return from the morning service at the parish church I asked him about the sermon; not only was he much dissatisfied with its lack of novelty, but he declared his intention of abandoning his afternoon walk—those were the days of five or six miles' unflinching constitutionals—and of redressing the balance by writing a Christmas sermon himself, in the privacy of his own chamber. At tea-time he returned to my bedside with what he had written, admitting he had not found it as easy as he expected and that he was not altogether pleased with

¹ Thus, my mother writes in her diary, after attending the French Protestant Pastor Brand's services: "The sermon a very minute description of the Prodigal Son: his career of self-will and passion, so described as not to be at all fitted for the ears and comprehensions of the two young ladies' schools who principally make up the congregation." And, again, when I was quite a little boy of seven or eight, my grandmother, who had taken me to Mr. Ridgway's church, wrote of her disappointment at the sermon, most of the letter being prompted by my critical disapproval of his discourse on the danger the Church was in from some recent operations of the Pope.

his effort. Nor was I. The central idea was not bad, and if not new, original, viz. that the beauty of the setting of the scenes of the Nativity tended to identify and over-emphasize an ideal—the ideal of new birth unto righteousness. All went well at first, and he did justice in simple and flexible English to the Star in the East: the wise men setting out on their journey: a description of Arabia Petræa, which from his travels he knew something about first-hand: and the songs of the herald angels; but then somehow the action stopped: he got into troubled waters which swamped both the ideal and the corporeal Messiah. He ended all abroad, though, as he himself said, “a sermon, like a race-horse, should finish strongly.” “That’s all wrong,” he said, putting his sermon into the fire.

Sermons in chapel at Harrow, though compulsorily attended, were pretty well listened to in my time. The Rev. John Smith was a great Harrow character and greatly esteemed. I am bound to say that I myself thought John Smith an old gentleman of dismantled intellect. His sermons seemed to me namby-pamby stuff, beneath, were that possible, the intelligence of his congregation. They dribbled along on “love the brethren” lines of over-sugared altruism. The Rev. Done Bushell, the mathematical master, was cast in a different mould, but was allowed to preach very seldom, the reason of these rare

appearances being that, when first he came to Harrow, he began his first sermon, not, in the usual way, by a text, but by saying "O sapientia" seven times, first in a still, small voice, rising in an ascending scale to a shout. According to school tradition, boys and masters were equally convulsed, and Mr. Bushell was not allowed into the pulpit again for some years. When I arrived there he had just been reinstated, and to my mind preached a good, robust sermon in praise of wisdom, with an undercurrent inspired by high mathematics.

Mr. Westcott, afterwards Bishop of Durham, took the Second VIth Form when first I went to Harrow. In later years I have read some of his sermons with admiration for their intellectual distinction, but they were too high and dry for a Public School audience. For boys a sermon wants staging; there must be, as it were, a *mise en scène* of colour and circumstance to catch the attention of the majority. Farrar, a house-master of my time, understood this *ad unguem*. But I personally much preferred Dr. Butler's sermons to Farrar's, whose upholstery was too florid and obvious for my taste. But still, whilst Dr. Butler's smooth and suave eloquence was generally admitted, his sermons had not Farrar's "majority" popularity. At times, perhaps, his presentation of the contradiction of sinners, and the best way of getting the better of them, was a little over elaborated and

esoteric.¹ Butler belonged to a time and school which dealt much in admonitions of our besetting sins—a favourite pulpit vintage with the clergy; yet a sermon of Dr. Butler's was seldom without passages of lofty encouragement to redeem the time, couched in silver-tongued English, which lifted me, for a few moments, from the narrow pitchpine pews and disciplined circumstances of chapel. His presence was magnificent: the corded silk of his ample black gown, of the richest; the fall of his hair, the trim of his beard, the cambric at his neck and wrists, the way he stood and managed his notes—*propria personâ*, Dr. Butler provided the decoration of his theme.

I imagine that with children the habits of grown-ups have much to answer for. This applies to both active and sedentary occupations. It will be remembered that Gibbon ascribed his early and invincible love of reading—not to be exchanged for the treasures of India—to the fireside influence of his Aunt Porten. I never saw my father read much, but he frequently commended the practice, and, though hard-up at the time, increased our subscription to Galignani's Library on my behalf. From the time of our arrival

¹ Arnold Toynbee, writing from a Scotch lodge in August, 1875, says of Dr. Butler: "I saw a good deal of him, and liked him very much. His manner puzzles one a little at first, but one cannot doubt the sincerity of his character, and his cultivated humility in talking quite cheers me." I do not think this cultivated humility had the same effect upon boys. There was often an ironical edge to it which made us uncomfortable.

at Fontainebleau our better acquaintance—mine and his—began in these ways, and quickly ripened from that time on. Thus he would sometimes suggest good novels to me, though he talked little about the plots of books. He only knew and frequented, as it were, the best entertainments of the day: Lever, Dickens, Thackeray, Hawley Smart and Trollope; but he was not so liable to Sir Walter Scott as either my mother or myself. Guide-books and picture-gallery history he knew well, and in this unambitious way had acquired a goodish knowledge of historical persons and places; but his reading had not served to diversify his ideas much, to judge from the rareness and fewness of his original comments on books. For one thing, he stammered—sometimes a good deal—and was shy about this and at not being able to express his thoughts fluently. Graver books were read for some particular bit of information required: and little else seemed to survive. Indeed, like many people, I question whether the popular novels of those days—and everybody read novels²—would be nearly so much read now. They were very long; the characters address each other at great length: the material of the book is often overwrought and too finished—in George

² Very possibly the general public—outside the higher grades of Politics and Letters—read novels more consistently for pleasure and occupation than they do now. For one thing, there were fewer books: they were dearer, and so gained in esteem. The outdoor amusements were largely confined to hunting and shooting. There was no golf, no lawn tennis—exercise was chiefly centred on a “constitutional” along the highroad.

Eliot's "Middlemarch," for instance, the by-products and minor incidents and persons are the best. Writers of high merit, like Mrs. Henry Wood, Charles Reade, Wilkie Collins, and Miss Braddon, give their readers plenty of story, but the story often has to drag a lengthening chain of extraneous words and paragraphs. Of course, there are distinguished exceptions, for instance, Le Fanu's "Uncle Silas." Here the atmosphere of terror is not spoiled by words: on the other hand, in an equally admirable novel, the sense of discomfort and mystery created by the earlier chapters of "The Woman in White" fades into average narrative.

In a general way my father read the novelists for their stories, not for their teaching; but as he considered game-preserving had been much overdone in England, and as he recollected and disapproved of the fiercer interpretation of the Game Laws, I remember well his introducing me to Charles Kingsley's "Yeast" as bearing upon his own views in the right way. Whyte-Melville—a favourite with my mother—he underrated, to my surprise and disappointment, my own mind being early led captive by the author's attractive accounts of life and character in Belgrave Square and aristocratic country houses, and of fox-hunting at Market Harborough, and even in more provincial hunting counties.

My first visual example of drawing-room reading

dates back to before I went to school, so I was quite a little boy. For part of one winter we went to Dover, a break in the Fontainebleau sojourn. It was wild weather, in February or March; our house, in a well-bred crescent, faced the Channel and seemed almost preternaturally exposed to the furies of the elements—and all four winds at once, so my father often declared. On either side of the drawing-room fire, which acknowledged the weather by frequent gusts of smoke, sat my father and my mother. My mother was reading “The Great Salt Lake City” and my father “Hard Cash.” No doubt, to some extent, these works enabled them to observe a sort of neutrality in the Armageddon of rain, hail, seawater and brine outside, yet my father occasionally rose to survey the conflict from the tall, dripping windows, and would shift from the arm-chair to a narrow furnished-house sofa; here he reclined full length, an unusual phenomenon which stamped itself on my memory. I had never seen the sofa occupied by him or any member of the family before. My mother, like Maria Lady Ailesbury, always sat upright, and was constantly warning her offspring against lolling habits. Thus she wrote to my sister, a little girl, absent on a visit: “Please to remember not to lounge at meals, or indeed at any other time.” But when I saw my father do this, I thought it a rather splendid action.

CHAPTER VII

EARLY SCHOOL DAYS .

FROM the first I took an interest in my own education. Even now I have "views" on the possibilities of a polite education. But this interest has been personal and restricted. The education of the masses—to make use of a trite expression—is not a subject which has ever occupied me in the sense, for instance, in which it occupies Lord Haldane or Mr. Fisher. Before I went for the first time to school, in September, 1864, to Winton House, Winchester—a select and famous establishment in those days, kept by the Rev. C. A. Johns—I had hardly come into contact with the Latin grammar. But from very early days I scrutinized critically the methods and aptitudes of my pastors and masters, and as, like a certain Dr. Stothard of eighteenth-century note, I have retained "a very wicked memory," I shall probably become tiresome on such congenial subjects as teachers and teaching at private and public schools, and the advantages of individual attention supposed to be supplied by private tutors or crammers. The poet Cowper declared that he

emerged from school life even more ignorant than most of those who have had the benefit of a classical education. And my father, who respected the classics—that respect which does not imply intimacy—frequently lamented the bad teaching he had received at Eton. Thus he determined that I should be given early opportunities of doing better. I was therefore started in this line at seven years old or so, soon after we arrived at Fontainebleau.

A M. Ezard, a respected “Fontaineblean,” was selected as the first guide of my infant steps; but my father, who attended the first two or three lessons for a few minutes and exchanged with M. Ezard a familiar quotation or two with great effect—a sort of compliments of the season—recognized that M. Ezard’s italianated pronunciation of Latin, which I quickly assimilated, would be incomprehensible and all but indecent at Eton or Harrow; moreover, he was a little startled at the absence of a Latin primer. M. Ezard—a ripe scholar according to the accounts he had received—started me on the first line of the First *Æneid*; being, as he went on to explain, of the same opinion as Robert Louis Stevenson, that a language is best acquired by plunging head-first into it. Thus we took “*Arma virumque cano Trojæ qui primus ab oris*,” and in this way, and in two or three mornings, he taught me the uses and possibilities of the accusative and of prepositions—a subject upon which M. Ezard debated agreeably and

which he handled as if he loved it—and a good deal about the siege of Troy.

After our stay in Waterloo Crescent, my father rented Adisham Rectory, situate in the open country about midway between Dover and Canterbury, for the summer months, from his brother-in-law, the Rev. H. M. Villiers. Our French governess's scope as a teacher was limited to geography and mythology—we used the French equivalent to Dr. Lemprière's plain-spoken work. By this time I knew French as well as I knew English—indeed, from doing my lessons in French my vocabulary was probably more copious in French than in English. As I was intellectually checky, disposed to take nothing for granted, and to give myself airs in the schoolroom, it was decided that I should get instruction of a more robust character, three mornings a week, from Mr. Midgeley, the curate or *locum tenens* of a neighbouring parish.

My way to Mr. Midgeley led me through the stretching corn-lands of that part of Kent. At that time wheat was still grown on a low margin of cultivation; much downland having been ploughed, it could pay its way. Home-grown wheat had not yet been affected by foreign supply. It was a longish walk, two miles or so, I dare say, and I carry still the remembrance of its treeless horizons, the wide fallows and unfenced fields—vetches and French clover, now and again a dazzling lemon-yellow streak of mustard;

isolated corn-stacks, at long intervals a yew tree or two, here and there an oasis of hurdled sheep, but void of the movement and vitality which pasture lands and their cattle lend to landscape. The emphasis was space—opal-tinted space early, space in monotonous as the day wore on, gilded space as the sun declined. Since then I have seen the plains of India, and I dare say now this sense of being “set in a large room” would not pervade me; but anyhow it left its mark. Wide horizons and great sweeps of land and sky are the things for me—mountains I nearly abominate, heavy woodlands inspire misgivings.

But I am wandering away into the larger education of nature, from the instruction I was on my way to seek. Mr. Midgeley directed his attention almost entirely to my handwriting. I used to copy several times a Latin sentence, of the sense and construction of which he had first made me cognizant; but it struck me from the first as a parrot-like performance. We concentrated, not on the merits of a case or a gender, but on the curves of a steel pen and the pronunciation of a word. As I have already said, by this time I thought for myself; so I despised this waste of time on externals.¹ But I liked Mr. Midgeley,

¹ The other day, after I had written this page of MS., I came across this letter. Its spelling and handwriting, I am bound to say, justify Mr. Midgeley's methods:

THE GROSVENOR HOTEL,
VICTORIA STATION, PIMLICO,

MY DEAR MAMA,

September 14th.

We got safe to London, but we had a very ruff passage, and we truck on a sandbank just owtside boulonge, and there was a nasty grating

so I kept this to myself, and declared at home I thought I was learning a great deal. A very fine white-heart cherry pervaded the side wall of Mr. Midgeley's house: after my calligraphic and euphonic exertions (if meritorious) he would reward me from this tree—the tree rather of mutual understanding than of knowledge.

Later, my brother and I were educated at Winton House, Winchester. This excellent and happy school was situated on high ground north of the water-meadows and college and cathedral precincts. Its pleasantest windows looked across the lilac mists which often shrouded the city to St. Catherine's Hill and the downlands, three miles away.

When I went there it was not a large school. We were a select community of twenty-two, being indeed chiefly recruited from the noble family of Lothair and its collaterals—Ansons, Lambtons, Charteris, Keppels, Wallops, and other young gentlemen of gentle birth and corresponding intelligence.

sound. I have got my new suits of trousers and they are very nice. I have my common one on to-day. papa has got me a beautiful desk in mahogany and lined with russian leather. I have a pair of new gloves (dogskin) not so bright as the Paris ones. I have a nice pormanteau and a pair of necties, one purple and the other carmine. the nap of my hat is rather long, and gets ruffled easily. we gave your pasels to Edmunds and Slucars and ordered a pair of strong boots. we have sent the pair of lase boots to be lengthend and soled. I was very sick crossing. papa will write to you to-morrow. I have had three photagraphs taken one with my hat on the others with my hat off. I am a great swell. good-bye dear mama. I will write to you as soon as possible.

your affecate,

THOMAS LISTER.

Thus, I wrote to my mother: "I hope you are quite well. I and the two Lambtons and Lord Anson are going down to the Deanery to have dinner. Poor Anson gets rather snubbed because of his title. I am very well. Lady Durham came here the other day. She is very pretty, she got a half-holiday. Anson is not a bad fellow." Before he was a schoolmaster the Rev. C. A. Johns was a trout-fisher, a naturalist and a gardener, and to an elm-tree at the gate of the highroad he had nailed a blackboard, setting forth in white letters: "Spinulosas and scolopendriums are set in these grounds. Trespassers Beware." Thus his pupils' aristocratic and scholastic seclusions were well protected. This ingenious device found great favour with the Dean and Chapter; it lasted long as one of the jokes of the Close.

From their boyhood upwards, Mr. Johns and Charles Kingsley had been fast friends. It was said that Kingsley referred the natural history and semi-scientific passages which abound throughout his books to Mr. Johns—"Glaucus," for instance, especially, though Kingsley himself had a competent rough-and-ready knowledge of these things, and seemed providentially designed to interest boys in the partnership of natural history and country sights and sounds. In the "Queen's Hounds" I have related how he came with us butterflying to the New Forest; how I heard him "Holloa" a fox away, and

how he took my class in Xenophon, and gave us a real idea of a *παραδεισος*.

On that occasion, he took us through eight or ten pages on lines which I commend to all schoolmasters, namely, giving us a free construe, now and then asking us a question on a construction or a meaning, but not troubling so much about that, as giving us a rational up-to-date, every-day idea of what was coming and what Xenophon was talking about.

I suppose this plan has the objection of taking up time and trenching on the more pedestrian part of a lesson, or perhaps of missing points of scholarship, which, I suppose, has to insist upon the trees more than upon the forest. But surely to create an atmosphere of understanding and perception, Kingsley's plan should be more resorted to.

Looking back, I should always send a boy to a school where he got natural history. I have never quite forgotten what little I myself got to know—really know—about butterflies and moths, and land and freshwater shells; mosses, too, we learnt something about and collected. And ever since, in my walks and rides abroad, I am half-unconsciously on the look-out for caterpillars, helices—Chalkhill Blues, Hair-streaks, Clouded Yellows, Marbled, or the Large White. I always longed to see a Large Copper or a Purple Emperor; a Camberwell Beauty was beyond hope.

Public opinion in a school, whether public or

private—perhaps in every society of over a certain number of persons based on the necessities of common life—is apt to be conventional; canons of external convention form, and for a time seem to petrify; they often come from origins difficult or impossible to trace.

At a school a nonconformist to convention, if otherwise popular, is called “mad.” If unpopular, he is boycotted. At Harrow, for instance, I remember so little bullying as to amount to nothing; but I recollect what came to much the same thing, the “exclusive dealing,” to use Mr. Gladstone’s euphemism for the boycotting his Irish Policy forced him to excuse and make the best of.

But I must not wander from Winchester to Harrow and the Land League.

At Mr. Johns’, as at all schools, these canons of convention made the visits of one’s parents or relations very nervous affairs. The visited boy was anxious, first, as to how his parents or friends would comport themselves with Mr. and Mrs. Johns, and secondly, how they would impress his schoolfellows. I ran few risks, as my people lived so much abroad; but Lord Wemyss tells me that he remembers my father coming. A painful impression was caused by his dress being thought frenchified. Always much influenced by weather, only a fine, hot spell would incline him to a visit of this kind, and in summer he usually wore white duck trousers, his ties being tied

in French fashion, a bow with very long ends, outside his coat. To my mind, no one could have looked more English; but it is true that he wore the dress of the swells in the Manet picture of the Champs Elysées, which the National Gallery now possesses. He also usually wore a tall white or black hat, with not much curl in the brim, and of the tile shape, also depicted in Manet's picture. On the other hand, I am glad to say that when Lord and Lady John Russell visited me, my grandfather's attitude towards Mrs. Johns seemed to me perfectly correct, and he began well with the school, as he asked at once for a half-holiday, which was graciously conceded. Thus all went well, though Lord John was not of the parent and guardian brand most appreciated, who took one down town with two or three of one's special allies, first to the confectioner's and then to tea at the "George." He may not have felt so confident as he seemed. Writing in 1841, Lady John speaks of his giving away the prizes at Milton Abbot school: "He made a little speech in praise of masters and boys, which made him and me more nervous than any of the speeches I had heard from him in the House of Commons."

Still, on the whole, my grandfather prospered. I believe he was Prime Minister at the time. Not so Lord Durham. His taciturnity and lack of rejoinder to Mrs. Johns' observations at luncheon called for adverse comments, and were only excused by Lady Durham's beauty.

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Lord Lichfield, a very serious-looking man, with large black whiskers and pale face, also trembled in the balance of our school favour. He wore a red ribbon round a wideawake of an unaccustomed shape—tall hats were usual, and held to be more seemly. However, the anxious Anson quickly explained that his father had come from a shooting-party, and that the bright ribbon was worn to arrest the attention of the other guns—in short, protective armour. The explanation was accepted.

But to return to my father. On two occasions he did not do so badly, arriving on horseback with a led pony for me, hired for the afternoon. After much altering of stirrups to suit me, we disappeared for three hours or so. This was thought very unusual, and the boys doubted if Mr. Johns would approve; but it was considered sporting, so on the whole I acquired merit thereby.

As regards those of my own generation, I desire to spare these pages estimates of the sentimental sides of brotherhood, marriage and paternity. It is sufficient to say that in all these I have been most fortunate and helped. But I shall make one exception, and say more here than I had intended about my brother Martin. We were close companions in spite of the long distance which separated us after we both grew up.

One of his first appointments was given him by Sir Frederick Weld, who was then Governor of the

Straits Settlements. "I sent him to Selangor where there was a parcel of ill-conditioned, sulky chiefs, and really did not expect much result. I went back after two years and found a garden." So Sir Frederick wrote of his work.

Later on he belonged to that grand band of pioneers in the Colonial service, to whose courage, patience, and endurance, the British Empire owes so much. He was little in England, for his work lay in the Native States of the Malay Peninsular. For years he lived alone, the only European amidst a crowded population of Malays; and by his patient work, and by his example and his life he rendered it possible to make a treaty whereby several countries formerly at enmity with one another became united beneath the Negri Sembilan flag, thus paving the way for the scheme of Federation.

But, after years spent in these trying climates, his health was undermined, and he suffered from constant attacks of fever. Anxious to finish some work he had in hand, he delayed his return to England till too late. He died at Suez, on his way home, in February, 1897.

The following is extracted from a letter from Lady Russell, dated April 17, 1897:

" . . . I do not wonder that there are times when you feel as if it were the 'beginning of sorrows.' It is always so when a terrible blow has fallen and left a blank for ever among those who have made the life of our life. But although confidence in the future can never be ours here below, this

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trembling sense of what may be in store for us ceases to have the mastery over our being, and hope becomes stronger and thankfulness for the blessings each day leaves us, becomes deeper, and, above all, don't you think that earth and Heaven are more and more linked together in our minds and hearts as life glides on. The best and truest of our earthly joys must be eternal, the bitterest of our earthly sorrows 'only for a moment.'

"But I feel that I have no right to say these things—for too well I know how weak, how faithless I have been and still am under the weight of buried hopes and joys—and how I need to learn from others the lesson of resignation."

In September, 1868, I went to Harrow, to Mr. A. G. Watson's house. From a letter of Mr. Johns', I appear to have been destined at an early age to the diplomatic service.

In one of Lord Beaconsfield's novels, a matron of high degree laments that her sons have not fortune for the Guards and decline to go into the Church. The Guards were certainly out of the question in my case, and the Church was never contemplated; but no doubt my Russell connexion indicated Foreign Office and diplomatic possibilities. To return to Mr. Johns, after declining the offer of a pug puppy, he writes a kind letter from Winton House, Winchester, January 26, 1868:

MY DEAR TOTTY,—

You ought to take a *very* good place at Harrow, *and so you will*, if during the next six months you fight manfully against your constitutionally indolent habit. With your powers you have a fine career open to you, but you will wreck

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yourself and your fortunes unless you pull away as if you were *stroke oar* and all depended on your exertions.

I am looking forward to your finding my Frank ¹ a snug berth in the Foreign Office some twenty years hence.

Don't, *now don't* disappoint me.

I am,

Your affectionate friend,

C. A. JOHNS

Grave doubts—which I fully shared—being entertained as to my ability to pass the entrance examination in arithmetic, I submitted myself during the last three weeks of my summer holidays to a special and severe preparation. My trainer was Mr. Wood, who kept a private preparatory school at Harrow, and was as versed as Ulysses in the propensities of examiners and in every guile of examination papers. Mr. Wood was a stout, kind man, and devoted unremitting attention to my case and my cause. Another equally backward young gentleman shared his anxieties—his trouble, however, was Latin grammar,² which, thanks to Mr. Johns and Winton House, had no terrors for me: indeed, in the queer eccentricities of

¹ "Frank," his younger son, is now head master at Winton House. The school is larger and more prosperous than ever. As to the "stroke oar" exertions I was to make, being no waterman—either then or now—this figure can have conveyed nothing to me of a tonic character.

² We used Dr. Kennedy's Latin Grammar when first I went to Mr. Johns'. It had a great number of illustrative tags, many of which still stick in my memory, and an elaborate Prosody. This was superseded in 1866, I think, by the "Public School Latin Primer." The order and the names of the tenses were all altered. Schools are conservative, and the new-comer was looked upon as an enemy of society by boys and masters alike.

construction, gender, supines, gerunds and so on, which haunt the plain speech of every language, I was, if not an epicure, at least a gourmet. There is reason to think that Mr. Wood found our ineptitude—jointly and severally—all but colossal, and my father wrote with pained surprise at such poor returns from the fields of Colenso¹ for the good seed in sovereigns he had devoted to my education at Winton House.

My father often descanted upon the pooriness and lifelessness of the education he had received at Eton. He had views on this subject which at times clouded my young life. They were, all will agree, of a disturbing character—namely to have me educated at Bonn or Heidelberg—I do not believe he had ever been to either place—nor could he speak a word of German, nor do I remember his ever saying anything about the great German poets or German philosophy, whose superior message to the universe Carlyle and an eminent group of writers and thinkers in this country were proclaiming—but still, there it was.

As a matter of fact I think he was neither better nor worse educated than the average of his order then and now, but he honestly believed in the weak points of a solely classical education.

Anticipating by some years the entry of com-

¹ In November, 1880, a vote of the mathematical masters abolished Colenso arithmetic at Harrow.

petitive examinations, he also commented in a way which made my flesh creep on the necessity of a higher standard of examinations: selection by results, and so on.

Purchase he disapproved of. For one thing, I dare say he felt indisposed to buy commissions for me and my brother Martin—but one of the reasons he adduced was the farce of the educational tests he had himself to satisfy when he got his commission in the Blues. He was asked only one question in geography—*viz.* what was the capital of France—the historical tests, which I forget, were quite as elementary.

But let me return to Greenside and Mr. Wood.

My compeer and I arrived in very fine weather, and the school possessed a large and pleasant playground of the permanent pasture which the hunting folks of those wireless days associated with the Queen's Hounds, the performances of Mr. Charles Davis and the Harrow country. That is not to the present purpose, but never before or since do I remember to have seen such quantities of mushrooms, though some years we have a good many at my own home. When my fellow ignoramus and I rose reluctantly about seven to deliver our first attack on the entrenchments of our enemies, the cricket pitch, on several occasions, seemed to be spangled with large and small snowflakes: well up in the Psalms, dew on Hermon, or manna in the

wilderness came to me as the word-attire for what we saw.

But it was a time for action rather than contemplation. Mushrooms by law are, or were, held a common benefit to humanity: it was not clear whether a large playground could be exempt from trespass in search of mushrooms in the way a walled garden would be, and with the full assent of the still abed Mr. and Mrs. Wood, we attended very thoroughly to the mushrooms before the needs of vulgar fractions or the Greek accusative of respect.

From the very first evening of my arrival, Mr. Wood had commended himself to me as the owner of a bay ride-and-drive mare. He had just returned from his afternoon ride and invited me to come to the stable and look at her.

She was a good "stocky" sort of mare: well coloured—that rich, ripe, horse-chestnut bay—but her shoulders were short and lumpy and at once attracted my critical attention.

"How does she move these?" I asked, placing my hand on their bullocky swell, as I'd seen my father do.

Mr. Wood evidently did not grasp the full import of my inquiry, but on being pressed he admitted that she sometimes "tripped." Her name was Polly, and she knew it when addressed by the gardener. It was a glorious summer, and the hot August roads of Middlesex, even in those days, had little or no grass

sidings, and were quite uncongenial even to a good hack; but Mr. Wood, though no great horseman, distrusted his liver and believed in riding exercise daily from three to five.

We worked in a front room giving on to the highroad, and soon after our arrival our studies were interrupted by the sight of Mr. Wood, pale and all of a heap, brought home in a gig with a dislocated shoulder and a severely sprained wrist. Polly he had had to leave out at a public-house near Stanmore with a pair of badly broken knees.

The household were much concerned, though Mrs. Wood was slightly triumphant as well as upset, at the result of Mr. Wood's devotion to the saddle, which she had never much approved.

"Those shoulders, I'm afraid," I would say enigmatically and in and out of season. But Mr. Wood, with a chivalry which endeared him to me, would admit no fault to lie with Polly. He reconstructed circumstantially the scene and manner of accident, and averred that he had clearly—but too late—noted and discovered a loose, large, smooth round pebble. This, an inequitable outcrop of an otherwise good highroad, had brought Polly to grief. The curious thing is that though I largely discounted this explanation, in view of the mare's conformation, Mr. Wood's description was so impressive that from that time on I still subconsciously look out for a *mauvais coucheur* of the type which floored Mr. Wood and Polly.

EARLY SCHOOL DAYS

After two or three days' pain and discomfort and much groaning our trainer was more or less himself again, but poor and, in her way, handsome Polly had to be written off. Her knees were too badly broken to mend, and she never returned to her comfortable box at Greenside, the affectionate gardener who took care of her, her admiring master, and the single wagonette and harness which she had quite adorned, and to whose service she was better adapted than carrying fifteen stone of unversed horsemanship. All these things are far off now; they are trifles now and were trifles then. But the three or four weeks at Greenside was, at all events, a time of honest and sustained pains. I worked hard, if not well, at my deficiencies, and this operation engendered a satisfaction of a rewarding kind, which I have allowed myself to experience very seldom since.

I remember the entrance examination in Speeches as well as yesterday, in late September and a splendid hot day. Each boy was given a roomy desk, semi-detached enough from his next-door neighbour to prevent intercourse or mutual help.

Accident placed me next Walter Long, and we took the same form—Fourth Shell; respectable, and that is all that can be said of it, as a place. Long was a very handsome boy and very well dressed. On this occasion I remember he wore a blue tie—not Harrow blue.

We had both finished all our papers about the

same time and given them up. The following conversation ensued:

LONG. Do you know anyone here?

LISTER. No; do you?

LONG. No; only you.

We both worked well our first term and came out high in Trials and got copies¹ and double removes.

¹ Copies had to be paid for by the parents of the recipient, under the heading in the account of "rewards." This arrangement found little favour with my father. School prizes were, I suppose, given out of some school fund, but I never got a school prize—only a very few "copies."

CHAPTER VIII

THOUGHTS AT HARROW

From earth is the breath and the blood, but whence is the soul? What or who is that one who is ever alone, who forms the six spheres, who holds the unborn in his hand?—*Rig-Veda.*

IDLE and careless at Harrow, I never got into Sixth Form; thus I had not the advantage of going up to Dr. Butler on Monday mornings in Greek Testament. Yet I had my compensations. The late Mr. G. W. E. Russell, Dr. C. Gore (ex-Bishop of Oxford) and Mr. Walter Sichel were in the same house, and at “the flexible age of sixteen” we all had rooms in the same passage.

As far as I myself was concerned, we were not—in any sense or degree of the school novel—friends. No doubt intensive friendships of the brand described and decorated by Mr. Vachell in these latter years and by Dr. Farrar in my own school days were formed and flourished, were broken up or withered on high grounds of sentiment; but I never got into anything of this exacting kind myself; nor, on first-hand knowledge, can I recall anything during my

time at Harrow equal to the soul-to-soul and hand-to-hand relations dealt in by these able writers. I do not think there is anything of the Vachell or Farrar quality of school-friendship in "Tom Brown," which comes much nearer the world of school and schoolmates than either "St. Winifred's" or "The Hill."

But though I was not a Vachell or Farrar friend of Gore or Russell or Sichel, they were much to me, which I am certain not one or other of us ever suspected.

Of much superior mind and scholarship, of more eager intellect than I—nearer the threshold of the larger possibilities of the University and manhood, poetry and novel readers, they started and diversified ideas in many directions—and in the matter of Greek Testament and Dr. Butler—more particularly Dr. Butler and the Pauline Epistles—I got to know something of their experiences. One Monday evening in particular, I remember as yesterday. Russell and Gore got into a controversy about what Dr. Butler meant by some interpretation of an Epistle which he had provided—not indeed for their learning, but for their free consideration and to exercise their notions or ideas thereon. That evening I was introduced to St. Paul: henceforward and until now a great personage in my estimation.

From that time on I have taken notice, as it were, of St. Paul and read—*passim*. I admit—a good deal



“CARRYING THE MAIL BAGS THROUGH THE SNOW”

From a water-colour sketch by Lord Ribblesdale

about him and the days and circumstances of his operations. I listen to and even read the Epistles with a constant and ever-renewing attention, but often with no exact understanding. It is in this way that, as it seems to me, I should have profited by the teaching—often tentative—of such a Pauline as Dr. Butler. Still, one can be too scholarly, too much inclined to look for details and in some degree so lose broad effects. At all events, in all the ups and downs of my longish and idle life I have retained—almost to the degree of touch—the vision splendid which attends St. Paul's writings and exhortations.

I do not know that either then or now St. Paul "communicates," in Mr. Jowett's phrase, "the life and fire of the Gospel" to me; I hold his writings—for my purposes, at all events—in every way superior to the Gospels. We need not go into that—my readers will be relieved—but for one thing, and a supreme thing, I have all along felt St. Paul to be a man "of reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting." I have felt—again all along—the opposite in the distinguished and central figure of the synoptic Gospels: such "fire," at all events, as they kindle or possess for me has been lighted, not by the Master but by His Apostle. It is St. Paul who draws and paints for me in lofty and exciting language the varieties of spiritual aspiration—the failures and disappointments and renewals which most of us have experienced at sundry times and in divers ways. But let me quote

from a high authority on the style and manner of the Epistles:

“The language employed in these is not the staid dignified discourse of the philosopher, but the language of ecstasy, as of one who had gone through the greatest transition possible to any human soul who all his life was passing through similar transitions; who, as it were, was ever carrying with him in one, the past and the present: dwelling between darkness and light: having the sentence of death in himself and yet more than conqueror.” That is surely the way to write about St. Paul.

All these emotions may be mere *fata Morgana*, but at all events, as I read the Epistles, they have a transitory meaning and exercise a rather transitory effect upon me which may be summarized—it is a summary of a smug sort—as the satisfaction of the spirit. Transitory is the right adjective; for I do not remember a time when I felt any continuing personal obligation to the universe, or any continuing concern about the state of my soul: to borrow a phrase from one of Mr. Maxwell’s novels, I have let life deal with me from hour to hour.

Life was dealing with me pleasantly enough in the first Fifth form when a confirmation under the immediate laying on of hands of the Bishop of London was an occasion to be made the most of at a great Public School like Harrow—though the Harrow of that time, as far as I could

judge, must be credited with a laudable freedom from tests.

Dr. Butler—respected by all as an athlete; admired for the rich amplitude of his corded-silk gowns and the fineness of the cambric at his wrists and throat; appreciated, as far as schoolboys can or do appreciate, for the aroma of scholarship and elegance which accompanied his movements, like Venus's amber cloud, formidable by reason of his gift of suave and supple irony—was a Churchman, of what complexion I never could make out from his sermons, and a considerable number of the masters were in Holy Orders. Of this number, notwithstanding their devitalizing *métier*, some were distinguished men. Mr. Westcott, afterwards Bishop of Durham, for instance, was a housemaster when first I went to Harrow; Mr. Sanderson, afterwards head master of Elstree; Mr. Rendall, Mr. John Smith, Canon Farrar. With officious zeal the parson masters—to use an old-time hunting phrase—"scored to cry": furbished up their dogma and divinities—trimmed their lamps, like the wise virgins, not only for our guidance and illumination, but against the coming of the Bishop.

The layman masters followed suit as best they could. Whether in or out of their element, all joined in the movement—boys and masters alike. It was pointed out to his family circle—if I remember right—by Lord Tennyson that most people conceived God as an immeasurable clergyman. Something of the

same conception animated Harrow's attitude towards the Bishop as the Deity's representative and agent.

As for myself, just as in Bethlehem of Judea an edict went forth that all the world should be taxed, so with a number of my passive companions was I detailed for confirmation, and informed that time and attention would be devoted to preparation for this end. I was not consulted: the Church Catechism, no doubt, supplies ample warrant, nor do I remember any particular observations or encouragements from home in my mother's letters.

From my earliest childhood upwards, passages in her regular and constant letters had made me aware of the nature of spiritual gifts; through her conversation (in the Bible sense of the word) I had come to recognize something romantic in self-control: something of adventure in the experience which works for patience. Perhaps she understood too well, or perhaps she reckoned too much on the uses of adversity: it was—to repeat myself—the vogue of her day to adopt the troubles of a troublesome world and all but court the contradictions of sinners. Be this as it may, I was to some extent already equipped with the sort of things about which I was to be instructed, knowing by sight, as it were, the armour of God which I was now expected to put on and wear for good and all: from being born in sin and a child of wrath I was to be converted in six weeks or so into a child of grace and a member of Christ.

THOUGHTS AT HARROW

However, I derived nothing from confirmation, and less than nothing from my preparation for its mysteries. Indeed, it drew my attention to a number of far-reaching inferences, drawn and asserted from questionable sources.

My coach in these affairs—a layman—no doubt did his best. He was my tutor, and side by side with considerable acquirements in unemotional scholarship had genuine taste and feeling for history. This we of his house discovered in pupil-room. Instead of Latin and Greek he took us into Macaulay's history. We prepared so many pages: Mr. Watson asked us questions in turn in the way such questions should be asked—to admit of discussion and commentary and further questions. I delighted in these—at most—three hours a week or so of more liberal learning. William III was Mr. Watson's hero—bracketed, perhaps, with Lord Peterborough—and we fancied he modelled his rather high-and-dry way with boys, in the matter of house discipline and routine, on what William III would have said and done if he had been a house-master at Harrow. I claim the credit of this notion, which was thought funny in the house. But, for turning and attracting our minds to the high matters at issue, I quickly said that, as Charles II said of Prince George of Denmark, there was nothing in him.

Yet his allocutions on confirmation could not be said to be null and void. They were carefully

prepared: if frigid, they were not uneloquent at times; they did not fall into the errors of *la razon de la sinrazon* which Don Quixote explained to Sancho as they rode together through the sere plains of Estremadura. But he explained without conviction: he affirmed without faith: he warned without alarm: he repudiated without distaste.

I regarded the sublime aspirations of the Supper of the Lord with respect; but the pressgang of circumstances had by this time given me some real and much instinctive knowledge of the world—or, anyhow, I thought so—of its ways and dilemmas; of the frailty of Human Nature, side by side with its high-flying possibilities; of inexplicable disharmonies.

Akbar's minstrel and favourite sang or wrote: "In every temple they seek thee, in every language they praise thee. Each religion says that it holds thee—the only One."

For those who accept the miracles, who hold that God has prepared for those who love Him such good things as pass man's understanding; who are willing that their lives should be hid with Christ in God; who daily cry, "Abba, Father," for succour and guidance, no such enigmas exist. But I am not of this company. I am still occasionally incommoded by a gust of Arnold's severe and earnest air—still, but seldom

In journeying on I feel
The shadow of a providential hand.

Just now and then I discern the possibilities of St. Basil's prayer that somehow or other those who have passed out are at rest: "gathered together in a green pasture: led forth beside the waters of comfort in a Paradise far from all grief, sorrow and mourning, in the glorious light of the Saints."

The relative advantages and defects of individual as against public school teaching would occupy a long chapter. It is a subject I could easily descant upon, but as Sheridan remarked, "easy writing makes hard reading," so I will only treat briefly my two experiences of the former—that is, private tutor education

My first taste of this was when part of my Harrow career was interrupted by a bad cold, which developed into what was called pericarditis in those days. (I daresay an obsolete disorder now.) My case seemed desperate and the last remedy was adopted. Prayed for in Chapel, I recovered, but as my convalescence was likely to be precarious and slow, it was decided that it would not do for me to remain at school.

What was to be done during this enforced absence from Harrow? After some pleasant months of idleness at Fontainebleau, it was decided to send me to the Rev. G. W. Cox, who resided at Camberley. This gifted gentleman took in a few private pupils of delicate or backward tendencies—pinewoods, heather and a gravel soil being supposed to be helpful.

IMPRESSIONS AND MEMORIES

The Rev. George Cox was of good reputation in the world of letters. He was also one of Messrs. Longmans' readers—an important position—and the close friend of E. A. Freeman, the historian, ever since his University days. At Trinity, both were mutually occupied with hopes and fears for the Church, and the future of the Ballad. Mr. Cox was also an author of distinction. "Tales of the Gods and Heroes" and other books on mythology were popular and admired in gentlefolk schoolrooms and private academies. They were uncomplicated and avoided discreetly the irregularities of the Gods and Goddesses, and they were written in a decorative style which attracted the attention of young people. Mr. Cox made full use of Homer—suns sank to rest in golden cups, and so on. Thus his friend Freeman, writing to someone from Ragusa, speaks of the sun setting "in a manner which would have satisfied Cox."

He was also a water-colourist and a devoted disciple of Turner. Indeed, he divided the whole of his time between reading for Longmans and the pursuit of this master's elusive charms. He copied oleographs of the best-known pictures on millboards with very dry small brushes, and thanks to a plentiful use of the two siennas, lake, cobalt and cadmium yellow, laid frequent oblations on the altar of his idol, with devoted perseverance and quasi-success.

I cannot remember that he taught me, or attempted

to teach me, anything; but it was a fine summer and the time passed pleasantly, my tuition being handed over to the Rev. Mr. Lowell, his assistant tutor, an Oxford man, and for what my opinion was worth, an adequate scholar with some capacity for coaching. But, at The Knoll, the yoke was easy and the burden light. I sauntered along "swaying my hands" in Oriental phrase. However, it is right to say that on returning to Harrow after an absence of nearly a year, I was allotted a remove for each term of absence, so I must have done a little better than it seemed to me I was doing. I was, alas, always much behind the eager, and but little in advance of the slow at school.

When I read the Classics with Mr. Lowell difficulties were admitted by both master and pupil, turnings were suggested and encouraged, difficulties in Greek were compared to the same sort of difficulties in Latin, and so on. This is the way to get on with dead languages. Lowell, too, never minded giving me a free construe of the passages or lines I had to prepare for him. Constantly turning to a Lexicon or dictionary without knowing the broader sense of the passage breeds puzzledom.

Mr. Cox was a very High Churchman, and had fitted up a private chapel in the house, which pupils and servants attended on Sundays. He believed in Ritual as a quickener of Faith, and gave with both hands of his substance—which, with a large family,

was not considerable—to provide vestments, vases, candles, stoles and copes and all that goes with High Church services. The Liturgy was intoned, mostly by Mr. Cox, in a high nasal drawl, as Mr. Lowell was not quite so certain of himself in this line. The chants were Gregorian; Mr. Cox, acting as precentor, would lead off the first verse or so in a querulous or joyful drone reflecting the mood of the Psalmist. Mr. Lowell, though no singer, doing his best at the Antiphonal, their joint effort was unagreeable.

All this was quite uncongregational, pupils and household could render no assistance. The hymns, mostly in Latin, pleased me. For the rest, I could not approve these services, though prepared like Lord Peterborough to be civil to all religions.

I had been destined from my earliest youth for Diplomacy or the Foreign Office. The good old days of connexion were quickly passing, but were not quite spent in 1870, and I had been given the firm offer of a nomination; thus, before I decided to enter the Army, for a short time I read for Diplomacy under the auspices of Mr. Hancock, another and later experience of the private coach's establishment.

Mr. Hancock would pass the day in black felt slippers and white cotton socks, in somnolent ease, adding to his store of easy-going and agreeable erudition from such uncomplicated sources as reviews, newspapers and Johnson's Dictionary.

For years I never read the papers, and till well on

in life, about the time I became a Lord-in-Waiting, I knew as little of what was going on in the world from newspapers as did Lord Dundreary. But this was not Mr. Hancock's fault. He subscribed a sovereign to a reading-room in the town, which he frequented himself from 5 to 7 most evenings, and begged me to read the leading newspapers, and especially articles on Foreign Intelligence or Constitutional questions, to make a note of the main contention of the article, and then perhaps next day we devoted ourselves to making it good and seeing how far we agreed or disagreed with the writer or even—for we were intellectually fearless—with the verdict of history.

Mr. Hancock was fond of saying, "Your father must be well up in the ways of the Whigs," or, "There is nothing like the governing families," and at other times, "You're a Whig bred and born"—tributes to my birth, parentage, and circumstances in which I acquiesced without comprehension or enthusiasm, for I was quite unread in Constitutional History.

It was finally decided that I should go into the Army, and I got my first commission on the 12th November, 1873, in the 64th Regiment. At that time the year at Sandhurst devoted to technical military instruction was in abeyance. It had been tried and failed, and if one got through the open competitive examination for the Army (the Purchase System had recently been done away with, to the great

indignation of the nobility and gentry), one was gazetted and joined the Regiment within two months, leave for this period being granted at the time of receiving one's commission.

However, I never joined the 64th, as the Duke of Connaught had promised my relations the first vacancy in the Rifle Brigade. Thus, in late January, 1874, I appeared in the Gazette as transferred to the Rifle Brigade. After some further delay, I was posted to the 4th Battalion, then quartered at Umballa.

That winter we were living at Caldwell, my mother's old home. My uncle and aunt were wintering abroad, and lent the house to her. This was a sojourn I look back to with the greatest pleasure. There was plenty of rough, everyday rabbit shooting, though the pheasant shooting was being nursed; at times many snipe came into the water-logged rushy fields which distinguished the lower lands of Ayrshire and Renfrewshire.

The pike occasionally behaved properly when, in a boat on Loch Lebo, David Revide and I used to circumvent the reedy margins. We would troll about ten yards out from the bank where the lily leaves grew, with an ordinary salmon rod, casting the line just as if it were with a salmon fly. In late October and through November the pike lay in the shelter of the reeds, and now and again we were successful. I do not think I ever got one over

10lb., and my memory for this kind of thing is infallible.

But better than shooting and fishing, I got my first experience of anything like a season's hunting with Lord Eglinton's and the Renfrewshire hounds. Cox was Lord Eglinton's and Squire Colonel Buchanan's huntsman. We had a carriage horse, an ex-hunter from Lord Leconfield's stables, but though useful to me he had quite forgotten his hunting days, and as often as *£. s. d.* permitted I hired from a job-master, Henney of Glasgow, who let out some capital horses.

It was during this interregnum between education and the Army that I came across a certain Major C. We met out hunting and in the county society of the neighbourhood. Major C., after twenty years' service in a Hussar Regiment, found himself at variance with the teachings of the Churches, out of humour with the Providential Design, and in general agreement with writers of differing degrees of eminence in whose works he found symptoms of agreement or any confirmation of his own views. The Major owned two good hunters which he rode with liberality over the walls of Renfrewshire. On our way home from hunting he was fond of turning from fox-hunting to Faith, and warned me against its pitfalls. After giving me a lot of useful advice about my Indian outfit and a letter of introduction to his tailor, he recommended a number of clarifying authors for

Hot Weather reading. My last meeting with the Major was at a ball. The Blue Danube had struck up and his partner was waiting. "I've got something for you," he told me, and he presented me with a list of books dealing with the weak points of Christianity.

The only ones I remember now were Strauss's "Enigmas of Life," and the whole of Rousseau and those chapters of Gibbon which it may be remembered played havoc with Robert Elsmere's convictions in Mrs. Humphry Ward's famous novel.

CHAPTER IX

PEMBROKE LODGE

WRITING in the early 'sixties—'sixty-five, I should think—from Pembroke Lodge to my mother, Lady John Russell says: "Totty" (the writer of these pages) "has left us after a three-days' visit, which I hope he enjoyed. He is a dear little fellow, and I was quite sorry to part with him. I have seen a great deal of him, and we were soon on very confidential terms together. I was only sorry there was not anything in the way of *sport* for him here, but W. and R. did their best for him, and he rode and boated and played cricket with them. He is full of spirit and manliness, a real English boy, in spite of his knowledge of the French language and French cookery. I made him help me to order dinner, and great fun he was; objecting one day to 'poulet rôti,' because we had it the day before. He was as obedient and good and obliging and civil as possible: a most satisfactory little fellow in every way; and so quick and clever, with a little confiding way about him that is very taking. Nothing pleased me better than his honesty in telling me that though

he was very happy here, P. Lodge was rather slow after Petworth."

The letter goes on about my clothes, and during the next three or four years there are constant references to our wardrobes, their shortcomings and requirements, in my brother Martin's and my own letters home. Part of the difficulty arose from our living abroad and having our clothes made by M. Psalmon, a Fontainebleau tailor, not conversant either in patterns or mode with the ideas ruling in the prejudiced school world on this side of the Channel. But another and stronger reason, which I have already foreshadowed, was the depleted and ever-diminishing state of the family finances; of this my brother and I were fully cognizant, and he especially loyally suggested cuttings down, adapting summer clothes to winter wear by linings of flannel, and other humiliating compromises, which, as the younger brother, already submissive to the rights of primogeniture, he was willing to invent and make the best of. In one letter now before me even his patience is exhausted: a pair of trousers of mine, of forbidding exterior and cut—one of our failures, in short—had been passed on to him from Harrow to Cheltenham. He writes to my mother: "Tommy's bags look like sacks. It is not edifying."

But I must get back to Lady Russell's letter. "The little confiding way" had evidently got the

better of her. She goes on: "I hope I have done right about his clothes; he begged me so much to order him some, and was so sure that Papa and Mama would like me to do so, so that I could not refuse. So I had the tailor (Swears and Wells) down here, and Totty and I together chose a grey for a whole everyday suit, which I think will look very nice, and also ordered two white waistcoats and two pairs of white trousers."

A further request for a jacket to wear with the white trousers is resisted; both Lady Russell and the tailor not approving of my choice of "a drabby sort" of pattern instead of dark blue, recommended by Swears and Wells.

As I was just returning to school and my legs grew in length at miraculous speed, I cannot think "Papa and Mama" were much pleased at the white duck trousers being ordered. White ducks and moleskins, which my father wore when a little boy at school,¹ had by this time gone quite out of fashion. In France I had always worn white clothes in summer, sometimes with a little stripe of blue or black.

I've quoted this letter because it shows the great kindness which I met with, from this first conscious

¹ Miss Faithfull told me (I met her at Terling, Lord Rayleigh's) that she remembered my father arriving at her father's private school at Hatfield. He had ridden all the way with a groom—on his pony—from Penn or London. He was dressed in white duck trousers, white socks and shoes, a tall hat and a dark blue jacket. She also remembered the present Lord Coventry's arrival in an open carriage with four horses and postilions.

time onwards, at Pembroke Lodge. Had I been their own grandson in blood, their solicitude for my welfare could not have been greater. In many ways, indeed, it was my second home, and during my Harrow years I generally spent my exeats, or some few days of my holidays, at Pembroke Lodge. In this way my recollections of Lord John are not only distinct, but, animated as they were by quite competent appreciation of the outstanding position he then occupied in public affairs and in the public estimation, they may possess some little interest even now, belonging as they do to the manners and customs of a different day.

As is often the case, Lord John Russell, the public personage, was very different from my grand-papa John in his home circle. Many hard things were said of him at different times—of his coldness, of his formality, of his embodiment of the high-and-dry Whiggishness; as, to quote the “Letters of Runnymede,” the heir of “the intellectual poverty of that ancient faction who headed a revolution with which they did not sympathize in order to possess themselves of a power which they could not wield.” His want of sympathy—that is, personal sympathy—also came in for satire and reprobation; to use a tiresome word much in vogue to-day, he was not “human.” His exertions in the cause of Reform are matters of history; they were admired at the time, but nobody for a moment suspected

Lord John of any personal affection for what Mr. Gladstone first designated as "the masses."¹ The lines in the "New Timon" may be worth quoting, in testimony to what I have just written:

How formed to lead, if not too proud to please,
His fire would warm you, but his manners freeze.
Like or dislike, he does not care a jot—
He wants your vote, but your affections not.
Yet human beasts need sun as well as oats;
So cold a climate plays the deuce with votes,
And while his doctrines ripen day by day
His frost-nipped Party pines itself away.

It is probably true that his enthusiasm stopped short at measures and did not, or could not, extend to men. It was said of him that when he placed his left elbow in the palm of his right hand—it is this attitude that the sculptor has chosen for the statue to his memory at Westminster—the House of Commons awaited some abstract sentiment in favour of civil and religious liberty. But in the family circle at Pembroke Lodge, though Lord John talked a great deal—for instance, at luncheon and at breakfast—nothing of this kind appeared. It was always about trifles; he would tell me about

¹ Mr. Gladstone used to tell and enjoy a story of an Admiral Wemyss, who stood for Fife at the time when better education for the people at large became a political question. Admiral Wemyss was told he might strike something sympathetic in that line on the hustings. He agreed and promised to do so. This is what he said: "I'm all for the people, d—n them, but I wouldn't educate them, blast them." The Admiral, said Mr. Gladstone, carried all before him, and headed the poll with flying colours.

the hunting and shooting recollections of his youth; especially the performances of a stile-jumper he owned when at a private tutor's in the Isle of Wight. He would amuse himself and us at the expense of his children's schoolroom routine, my progress in the classics in particular, and school education in general.

All this sort of thing he could touch with pleasing irony, and had no objection to making jokes at his own expense by way of illustrating the little ironies and vagaries of adolescence. Sometimes he would talk about books, more often about poetry, and always with a *pince-sans-rire* quality about his observations on men and things which was entirely to my mind. Much as I enjoyed the great, and for me everlasting, subject of books with my grandmother, this particular quality was entirely absent from her fertile and stimulating appreciations. There was always something a little cloying about Lady John's concentrated sentiment for moors, "drumlie burns" and Border minstrelsy.

He also entertained himself and his descendants unto the third and fourth generation, at the gentle expense of his political opponents. I use the word "gentle," for, to quote Sir Robert Peel on his House of Commons manner, "bludgeons were not in Lord John's way."

In those days, the relations of rival Party leaders and of public men of political eminence holding opposite views were in the main courteous, but

formal. They were not unfriendly, but in no sense intimate. There was little or no familiar house-to-house intercourse between the big folk of Whig and Tory families. In a sense, this tacit understanding verged on proscription, and public grounds for this easily trenched upon private friendships. Thus it was not the way in those days to link arms in the Lobby and dine together at a mutual friend's after vilipending each other across the floor of the House of Commons, as on one occasion, which stands out in my memory, I saw Mr. Arthur Balfour and Mr. John Morley do. In those days—indeed, during the fifteen years of my official connection with the Liberal Party—I frequented the gallery of the House of Commons when Irish affairs were being discussed. I met both these distinguished men constantly in the same society, and having regard to the notions they seemed to entertain of one another in Parliament, I sometimes marvelled that there should be no “loss of friends.” I recollect that Lord Spencer, who belonged to the older school, had never met Mr. Arthur Balfour until one evening at dinner at our house.

Thus my grandfather's critical comments were almost too impersonal, at the expense of views and measures rather than of men. They lacked, in this way, the breath of life. I used to ask what sort of man so-and-so under the pillory was like, whether he liked horses, if he hunted or raced, how he dressed—in

my quite childish days, whether he could draw; which was an old Pembroke Lodge joke at my expense. But all this was done in a well-bred way, and at the feet of this acknowledged Gamaliel I imbibed a blend of Whiggish Retrenchment and Reform principles and notions which I have never abandoned in theory, and which, upon the whole, have worn well and stood the test of such observation as I have had wits enough to devote to the conduct of our public affairs and the operations of our statesmen during the last forty years.

A good deal of this early influence, I imagine, was by more direct inheritance. Before my father severed himself almost completely from early associations and friends, he had been brought up in the world of the earlier volumes of the "Greville Memoirs," at all events in the straight sect of the Whig world Greville tells us so much about. Thus the exclusive limits of surroundings and connexions, Holland House, Chesham Place, Kent House, Woburn, Endsleigh, had resulted in a *nil admirari* attitude to men, women and things in general which was unpolitically Whiggish.

Besides, the upper crust of the racing set, which he frequented in his palmy days, was a cool, critical community, suspicious alike of motives and human nature; unconsciously, I picked up a good deal of this in our long rides in the sand alleys of the Forest of Fontainebleau.

Laisser-faire, Free Trade, economy, contempt for anything like national display (I hesitate to surmise what Lord John would have had to say about the new Delhi), a grudging limitation of armaments, an alternative and touching reliance on diplomatic notes and memoranda of his own composition, a polite distrust of bishops, a frugal confidence in the Establishment and in the methods of the clergy, toleration and free speech at home, non-intervention abroad, the liberty of the Press and of the subject—all these things came up in their turn. He would illustrate or comment on them, half-mockingly, but often with some pithy or pungent illustration from history, and by the time I got my first commission, in 1873, I had had a good many sidelights thrown upon our system of government through the “prism of concrete constitutionalism”—as someone or other described Lord John Russell.

I have alluded to Lord John's exploits on a stile-jumper, and at Pembroke Lodge riding continued to be his favourite and only exercise. He always rode nice horses; one was iron-grey, but the object of his affections was White Surrey. I can hear him now, ordering White Surrey in the Shakespearean line of which he seldom tired: “Saddle White Surrey for the field to-morrow,” then a pause: “For this afternoon.” In fine weather, he would ride White Surrey up to London by Robin Hood Gate and

over Wimbledon Common, or sometimes by East Sheen Gate. I have sometimes ridden part of the way with him. They had some very good ponies, one called Hymettus, on whose qualities Lord John used to invite me to write a copy of verses, I forget why, but something connected with some equestrian vicissitude. Then there was Clova, a most pretty pony, which came from the forest of Clova, when Lord John was lent Abergeldie. In these riding days Lord John dressed well. He rode in a frock-coat and, I remember, a very light-yellowish pair of trousers, strapped down over his small feet. His head was surmounted by a very large, long-napped, cream-coloured, beaver tall hat, which rather dominated the situation: his hat, and probably his head, were out of proportion to his small, neat body.

The classics he often talked about, and, I believe, quoted with felicity at Westminster. The invariable opening, when he wished to hear what sort of books I was reading at Harrow was, "Your father knows his Horace," mindful of my father's quotation from that poet in the letter about racing referred to in an earlier chapter. This gambit and the recurrence of the White Surrey line always rather disappointed me; monotony in the trivial should be avoided, but family jokes die hard. I have always noticed that minds taken up with intricate and important affairs are prone to refresh themselves in this way; my

experience, indeed, is the converse to the Latin adage:

Parva leves capiunt animos.

“Leves” should be “magnos.”

Whilst I was at Mr. Johns’ private school, Lord and Lady Russell came to visit my aunt Isabel at the Close. It was announced that they would also visit me, and, better still, ask for a whole holiday. Mr. Johns was highly gratified at the prospect of receiving so distinguished a guest—Lord Russell was either Prime Minister at the time, or only just out. He wrote to my mother suggesting the propriety of the occasion being recorded for all time by Lord Russell writing a short copy of verses to commemorate so great an honour. Lord John was by no means averse to the idea, but shrank from its performance, and after some *pourparlers* finally excused himself for shortcomings on the plea that Westminster School had never been distinguished for versifiers. However, some lines were sent. I was not of an age myself to judge of their merits; doubtless, as in most copies of fugitive verse, “some lines were better than others,” to quote the cautious criticism of an elaborate copy of verses submitted to the Marquis of Wellesley.

As far as I remember, the visit passed off well, and I certainly received a sovereign. My grandfather was a capital tip, but shy about giving it himself; thus, when I returned by an early train to

school after my exeats, I always went to say good-bye to him. He was always up and half-dressed by 7.30, and MacAlpine, his Highland valet, used to give me the sovereign after, not before, our farewells. He was too shy for thanks, which, as I was always short of pocket-money, I should have proffered very heartily. MacAlpine, an Aberdonian of great bulk and stature, gave it to me in a formula as constant as White Surrey or Horace: "Your grandfather wished you to have this." Those who visit the land of the mist and the mountain can supply the accent for themselves.

When Lord John did not ride to London—he was constantly backwards and forwards—he drove in a single brougham with a beautiful white horse of size and quality, which made nothing of the journey. All this was very well done at that time. Tall footmen in the conspicuous Russell livery, in powder, grey horses, brass harness, looked well with the pale blue picked out with brown of the carriages. The footmen wore gold cords, like rigging of a sailing ship, to their hats. The cords must have been mysteriously attached to the cockade, or possibly a rosette in the crown of the hat—I forget; nor have I seen such hats for years. The name of the stout, high-coloured coachman was Jason; this also led to innumerable classical jokes. He was compared favourably in one sense, but pusillanimously in another, to Phaeton.

In the accepted sense of the word, Lord and Lady John did not entertain at Pembroke Lodge; for one thing, it was a small house and they had a large family. Moreover, they were much in the thrall of relatives and collaterals—myself, for instance; room was always made for me. They also preferred, not perhaps the privacy of their own chambers, but the privacy of their own views, though upon these they were quite ready to argue between themselves. But most afternoons somebody or other of eminence in the world of politics or letters, and distinguished foreigners in the same line, broke into the solitudes dedicated, in theory at all events, to the nightingale's "long and slow preamble" and to the principles of the Revolution of 1688.

I was intelligent enough to take advantage of these distinguished visitors. I watched and listened. In several cases their appearance, their gait, the cut of their clothes are, as it were, photographed, or, better still, filmed, on the retina of my visual mind.

Lord Clarendon, for instance, I remember perfectly in this way—in dress, deportment, manner, the arrangement of his hair, the cut of his whiskers, the fold of his twice-round cravat. He presented me with an exact incarnation of my notions of the model statesman. Nothing seemed wanting: he held in his right hand a sheaf of Parliamentary papers. Like Mr. Disraeli, he no doubt respected his tailor too much to outrage his frock-coat pocket

with that sort of thing. For some reason or other neither Lord nor Lady John was at home when he arrived one coldish afternoon in my Easter holidays. He found me moving about the house in my socks. After a courteous interchange of commonplaces on both sides about the weather and where Lord and Lady John could have got to, we became on more familiar terms, so much so that he inquired, looking at my worsted socks, why I preferred to go shoeless. I explained that I was growing quickly, that my supply of boots, always short, was further curtailed by my only wearable pair being damp and tight; also, that through some negligence in the home circle my house-shoes had not been packed. Lord Clarendon thought me very wise in discarding a tight pair of boots, and said that, as he often experienced the same sensations, he should consider following my example at home. We then talked about Harrow. He was an Harrovian himself, and he was just telling me of the Harrow of his day when Lord John appeared and they retired, no doubt to draft a note to the Porte. I am under the impression that this conversation took place in the room which was used as a bedroom by Lord Aberdeen on the momentous occasion of the Declaration of War on Russia.

Well, that is one recollection; but now I come to one which extended over two nights and two days and a half.

This period I spent *à trois* with Lord John and

Mr. Charles Dickens. Lady John was confined to her room by illness and a depressing diet of "Revalenta Arabica," and no other member of the family happened to be at home. I was then, and am still, as staunch to Scott as to Dickens; but I think that, had you given me my choice of the two men, I would rather have seen and listened to Dickens. Anyhow, my delight and astonishment at this unexpected good fortune can hardly be described.

I cannot remember Mr. Dickens saying anything to me. Indeed, he was not nearly so polite and agreeable as Lord Clarendon, nor, strange to say, do I remember his talking much to Lord John. My grandfather did all the talking. Dickens, I imagine, was apt to be a little florid where, as in this case, he greatly admired; and Lord John Russell, from shyness and naturalness, was not a responsive altar to praise and oblations of any kind. The first evening, I recollect that two or three tributes—tributes of the kind which gave little opportunity for rejoinder—were coldly received. However, those two evenings were most agreeable, Lord John at his best and Mr. Dickens an admiring audience—upon the whole, of the House of Lords type. He listened like a Red Indian, with an occasional grunt of assent, like the "Wah" of that interesting people, according to Fenimore Cooper.

One evening they talked of epigrams and pro-

verbs. The proverbs came through Spain, a great subject with Lord John—his travels, adventures, the life of the roads, the characteristics, of the people. Dickens asked him for the exact wording of his (Lord John's) definition of a proverb; it has always been in dispute. "Did you," Dickens asked, "say 'The wisdom of many and the wit of one'?" "No," said Lord John, and I can hear the dry creakiness of his rather high voice. "I did not say that; I said 'The experience of many and the wit of one.'"

Dickens was extremely smartly dressed—over-dressed, I should say. In the daytime, he wore a pair of striped trousers—stripes were the vogue—of broad black and blue, a frock-coat open to a low, double-breasted waistcoat, with a general effect of gold chains, charms and eyeglasses; a splendid black satin scarf of amplitude and lustre, secured by a fine pin, very much in the character of his picture in early life by Maclise.¹ By this time his hair and beard were white and his face high-coloured. At dinner he ate and drank very little. Champagne did not circulate at Pembroke Lodge, nor was it the fashion of those days to have whisky-and-sodas; but there was port and madeira, and we sat for some time over the wine. Mr. Dickens drank madeira sparingly. I remember noticing that, with the warmth of the room and food, a vein in the centre of his forehead became very prominent. His evening-clothes

¹ Well reproduced in Forster's "Life," vol. i.

were extremely well cut; the shirt frilled, with bright, perhaps diamond, studs. Although his hair was white, he gave me no sense of age in movements or appearance. With a lesser man, I should have described the whole look and character as dapper, but Dickens was one of my heroes, and I was charmed by everything about him.

It is not my intention to furbish up a gallery of portraits. In later years, I remember Mr. Froude and Mr. Lecky distinctly, sitting round a rather feeble fountain near the cedar-trees on hot afternoons. They both came into the category of those I watched and listened to.

It is to this meeting that I assign the compliment Mr. Lecky paid me by reading my book on the "Queen's Hounds," writing me a longish letter about it of encouragement and approval of the historical parts. By this time Lord John was a very old man. The Lord John of my boyhood's recollections had long ceased to be. Thus the trend of the conversations under the cedars or round the fountain was Wordsworthian: wanting in Attic salt; too much about birds and flowers; robins, roses and squirrels—good of its kind, but still——

I never remember Lord John saying anything about his own writings, nor do I know in what estimation they were held by the lettered folk of his day. His political essays, though written with a certain frigid elegance which is not unpleasing, are

so full of Whig platitudes as to resemble a handy manual of the evolution of Liberal principles. There is much more bite about a small volume, little read, published I think, anonymously, "Reflections of a Gentleman who has Left his Lodgings."

My grandfather's moral and political courage—or are these adjectives self-contradictory?—is attested by both friends and foes of his day. Mr. Gladstone, in other respects not an enthusiastic admirer, has often descanted to me upon this high quality. Tributes of the same kind were paid by Mr. Disraeli and by other eminent men of the political period in which he played a leading part. His willingness to undertake anything at the call of a public duty was summarized in a well-known epigram.

But in the home circle his private courage was also conspicuous. No better example can be given of this than that in 1855 he met, with equal mind, the unexpected arrival of Lady John and her nursery party in Vienna on the occasion of his attending the Congress, as the Queen's representative, on that important occasion; and that in 1866, on the fall of his last Administration, he set out with his wife and five unmarried children and most of his servants for Italy.

I do not like to end this chapter without some reference to the charm and elevation of Lady John Russell's letters. She wrote pretty often to some one or other of us, more especially to my mother.



LORD RIBBLESDALE AND HIS DAUGHTER BARBARA

Patience and hope—for she had witnessed and experienced many sorrows—were the themes she adorned on writing-paper and illuminated in everyday life. Yet, with all this, my grandmother had a modern practical and half-playful style. Visits, which her husband was only supposed to enjoy from those bound up or associated with earlier years and forgotten affections, had to be carefully arranged. He had expressed a wish to see my aunt and his stepdaughter, Lady Melvill,¹ in whose society, as Miss Lister, he had always taken pleasure and been amused. The omens were not favourable on the day fixed. A half-penny post card reached her just in time to stop her; “Der alte Mann ist krank; kommen Sie nicht.”

¹ When there was a question of her (then Miss “Bessy” Lister) having an allowance, Lord John asked her who her bankers were, not expecting any definite answer. “Gosling and Sharpe,” was the reply, “as the Sharpe will counteract the Gosling.”

CHAPTER X

WINDSOR

“**N**O lone house in Wales with a mountain and rookery is more contemplative than this Court,” so Mr. Pope—then living at Bracknell—expresses his appreciation of Georgian Windsor to one of his correspondents. Victorian Court life, as I knew it from 1880-5 and again from 1892-5 (but in the latter period less as part and parcel thereof) was certainly not contemplative—sober and steadfast and demure, still penumbrous by mourning for the departed, yet not contemplative, nor indeed dull, in the sense of the lone house in the rookery. “Brilliant” is the conventional epithet for Courts; that it certainly was not; but the Windsor Court had a dignified character of its own. About its almost unguarded¹ precincts one felt the same transaction of affairs one feels about some unostentatious but venerable City bank, or the premises and ways of a long-established business of high reputation.

In an anonymous article in the *Quarterly Review*,²

¹ As far as I remember, no guard; possibly a sentry or two, but hardly in evidence—only here and there a constable or plain-clothes detective, but reduced to their simplest expression.

² I believe it is an open secret that this engaging article was written by Sir Edmund Gosse.

which appeared and attracted much attention some years ago, the Queen's entourage was described as living in "an anxious atmosphere." There is truth in this: Court life—its disciplines of clothes and ceremonies, of desire to please, or at least not to transgress conventions or offend personages—inevitably generates something of this kind. But it is also answerable for an intellectual surrender and a lethargy of habit—regular hours, regular meals, regular bedtimes—which I noticed in some of the personnel and was the very reverse of "anxious."

Thoroughly amiable and strictly reliable, they dwelt in a Sleepy Hollow, protected by the Norman Tower, the North Terrace, and the Keep from the common ups and downs of the external world. News—home and foreign—came first-hand or all-but, to Windsor; but, for instance, at the Household dinner—a quiet affair enough of from eight to fourteen persons of both sexes—it was seldom mentioned and never discussed. The *vis inertiae* was too much for us: we were, in all essentials, in, but, as thinking men and women, not of, the world.

Thus, I found my Lord-in-Waitingship most agreeable—the pay was good, the service light, my Royal Mistress most kind, the yoke unexacting. As the Queen dispensed with a Lord-in-Waiting at Balmoral and Osborne, and as she came to London very seldom, one's duty was confined to Windsor.

A "wait" lasted a fortnight. One year, thanks to the hazards of the roster, I only did two or three days' waiting, another only four or five. One year I did two whole fortnights, a phenomenal achievement. These light years I regretted, for although I found Court life at Windsor *en gros* was uninspiring, the opportunities of constantly seeing and even getting to know distinguished persons of all sorts and colours, whom I should never otherwise have come across, were entirely to my mind and taste. This part of Court life I found agreeable and, indeed, stimulating, anyhow to such powers of observation as I possess. Then I liked my room, looking out over the North Terrace to Slough and Ditton, a wide panorama, peopled by the fine elms which adorn the Thames Valley, indigo green at midsummer, golden in October, purplish in March. One resided in one's bedroom—at least, I did—and seldom visited the formal and bare equerries' sitting-room. I had a capital roomy writing-table, lots of well-chosen stationery, an arm-chair and a sofa of merit; the supply of coal was unstinted, and a scarlet-liveried footman of becoming altitude inhabited the corridor and brought me excellent tea in the afternoon. The room itself was on the same floor as the library, all but next door; only the Master of the Household's¹ official room intervened. He was a good and instructive neighbour. His preternaturally accurate

¹ Sir John Cowell.

and ingenious mind worked on the varied material resources of domestic life, in castle, cottage or country house, *sans trêve et sans relâche*. Locks, keys, sanitary arrangements, water supply, arterial and subsidiary drainage, town or country, public or private, were his playground. He rejoiced in his mastery of their evolution and the theory of their progress, much in the same way as Gibbon chose remote dynasties for his humming-top and cricket-bat. For relaxation Sir J. Cowell enjoyed a ride, which we sometimes took together, on the Royal hacks, most of which were named after the victories of those days—such as Kassassin, Ulundi. But, better still, Sir John Cowell, an engineer officer, was a friend and brother-officer of General Gordon, and he gave me a sheaf of Gordon's letters from Jerusalem, making good engineering and field-fortification details of the siege of Titus. At first, I felt as much at sea over these as over the locks and the check system of the lavatories—diagrams, dimensions and algebraical calculations not being in my line; but the letters abounded in felicitous quotations from the Bible, in little free-hand spirited drawings and conjectures in red ink. They were written in the racy, living style of which General Gordon had the secret.

The late Sir Richard Holmes was at that time librarian and always helpful and hospitable.¹ Further

¹ The Lord-in-Waiting was entitled to any books he wanted from one of the best London circulating libraries—a great privilege.

encouraged by the *ambiente* of tradition, of comfort, of the aforesaid stationery, of the scarlet footman and the fragrant teas provided at the Royal expense, I read a good deal: the winter I was in waiting twice, as much as I could get from books Sir Richard suggested about the second and third rank men of the French Revolution. Not one word of all this do I remember now. Disappointing, but true—and why? I wonder. For one thing, I took elaborate notes, touching them up—fired by General Gordon—with red ink; I am inclined to think this of itself was fatal: the facts of taking the note, of its neat writing, of admiring its conciseness—all this involuntarily relaxes the muscles of memory: one feels absolved by penmanship pains from further responsibility. Worse still, one remembers the general look, visually, of the note—its situation on the page of the blank book—but not its sense or tendency.

But now to come a little closer to my Royal Mistress, as the Duchess of Roxburghe always styled the Queen. I am under the impression that I once saw the Queen when I was quite a little boy at Pembroke Lodge, but I may be confusing her with the exiled Royal Family of France—a confusion she would not have relished; but anyhow, I cannot recollect having seen her again, except at a review in the Long Valley at Aldershot, till my appointment as Lord-in-Waiting. I, at once, became loyally interested in her appearance and in her ways. In

the room where she always dined hung a portrait of her, done, I imagine, in the late '70's, by Von Angeli; in its way, this is a good example of the master and a good portrait of Queen Victoria in 1885. Her expression always gave me the impression of an overtaxed mind: overdriven and overworked by her fidelity to her ideals of duty to the State. This had resulted in the half-cross,¹ half-tired expression she often wore. In the portrait Von Angeli, with that uncomfortable gift of second-sight said to be vouchsafed to some portrait painters, selected this expression as characteristic. The Queen never liked it from the first. On its first being hung in her oak-lined dining-room at Windsor, she asked the Duchess of Athol what she thought of it; the Duchess, a downright woman, with a robust Scotch accent, replied, "It is justice without mercy, Ma'am." This did not make the Queen like the picture any better.

At the same time, to judge from other portraits of her, and allowing for more gentle treatment than she had received at the German painter's hands, the Queen, when young, must have been a pleasing and comely person. At times, when she was not tired, I discovered easily something of the charming por-

¹ In this respect—crossness—I notice a great improvement in these latter days. In my youth people were frequently—almost generally—cross to one another. I attribute the change to the urbane sway of the Ritz and corresponding establishments, restaurant life and music-halls, to the Riviera express and winter sports—the world is more amused and so better pleased.

trait of her by Sully, an American artist, now at the Wallace Collection. I commend it to all her loyal subjects' attention. However, to pass away from her former good looks, the dignity of her mien and carriage was incontestable when I came into the ambit of the Queen's more immediate presence.

At the time of Prince Leopold's wedding I was put on special waiting to the Grand Duke of Hesse. Monarchical institutions and families were going strong in Europe, and a large number of Royal personages were invited to the ceremonies and to take part in the festivities at Buckingham Palace and Windsor. One evening a small evening party was given at Windsor, almost exclusively for Royalty and ambassadors, with a mere sprinkling of the leading statesmen of this country and dignitaries of the Church. The party took place in one of the smaller apartments—a becoming enough room, in shape, proportion and decoration, for the purpose. It was a well-done, formal affair—at once simple and stately. The general company stood round this room, in good time and array, awaiting the Queen's advent, to be preceded by the entry of the more considerable personages staying at the Castle. In one way it was an inconvenient room for the purpose, as the cortège had to come in by a narrowish side door. Just as, heralded and guided by high officers of the Household, it debouched, walking backwards

and bowing forwards becomingly from the waist, an ominous check occurred, amounting to a block in the traffic. Thanks to my position with the Duke of Hesse, I was able to report to a startled company—it made me quite popular—what had occurred. It had been discovered, suddenly and simultaneously by the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Connaught, that the blind Duke of Mecklenburg's Garter had shifted hind-side before into an undesirable and indecorous position. The Prince of Wales and the Duke of Connaught had at once set to work as men of action, to repair the mischief. Their efforts were successful, and after an anxious interval the Queen's *avant garde* of Princes, Rulers and Governors was safely marshalled and ordered into position in the chamber.

It was a striking sight: by inheritance and practice Royal personages know how to do these things. They illustrate the Psalm: "The kings of the earth stand up and the rulers take counsel together"; and as I watched the Princess of Wales—the cynosure of every eye—she seemed the embodiment of all that poets and artists had expressed about beautiful and noble women.

Then came a longish, perceptible pause. Then the Queen by herself, in black, diamonds and the blue ribbon of the Garter, not tall, not young, not remarkable, plainly dressed, yet with something about her, even allowing for inevitable association of idea—such as Windsor Castle and the Crown of England,

the representative of Empire—which has fixed a recollection of prestige and majesty upon my memory. Bowing to her visitors, her guests and her Court, the Queen proceeded slowly round the assembly, moving as it were on castors: hardly seeming to want the ebony walking-stick she used with ease—*Incessit Regina*—with hardly a word to individuals, but with a great graciousness of smile and manner to all.

As I have said, this was a junta of Princes and Governors, but the only person to whom the Queen devoted any time or anything like conversation that evening was Mr. John Bright. In many ways conspicuous by his burly figure, his long, snow-white hair, his features, long familiar to us from *Punch's* cartoons, Mr. Bright especially stood out from the rest of the company, thanks to his costume. I believe he had always set his face against wearing official uniform; on this occasion he was dressed in a well-cut and becoming black velvet suit. It is the only time I remember having seen black velvet trousers, evening coat and waistcoat, frilled shirt, the sharp-angled gill-collar of the '30's, well girt in a double-folded cambric cravat with long ends, tied with a careful ease which D'Orsay or Beau Brummell must either have envied or commended—the whole effect being Quaker-like and venerable. I thought—though Heaven knows why—of Franklin.

Let me now pass away from the Queen, as it were, *en grande tenue*, to the Queen in her every-

day discharge of the functions of a constitutional sovereign.

Very few distinguished persons emerge unscathed from the ordeal of Professor Goldwin Smith's appreciation of their capacity or performance. Queen Victoria was not one of the fortunate exceptions; the Professor says of her: "She was a most ordinary woman, she had no intellect. She disliked the society of intellectual men; that was why she liked Osborne and Balmoral." This is all wrong. The impression I derived from many inquisitive conversations with persons competent to form an opinion of the Queen's ability—for instance, Sir Henry Ponsonby, Sir A. Bigge, Sir John Cowell, Lady Ely, Miss Horatia Stopford, all of whom saw and worked hard for her every day, and from Cabinet Ministers and distinguished men such as Mr. Lecky and Professor Huxley, who both stayed at Windsor when I was in waiting—is that the Queen was a thorough craftswoman in the operation of Government; so much so that it is possible that, like the Laird of Cockpen, her mind was taken up with affairs of State to some exclusion of interest in the kind of things we associate with intellectual cultivation and refinement. At luncheon and dinner, for instance, in the society of cultured men of various mind and prominence, men whom I feel certain she desired to honour, her faculty for easy conversation was so limited as hardly to exist. This seemed to me a

pity, for upon the testimony of witnesses who knew what they were talking about, her mind was trained, apt and efficient. But it was absorbed in politics and the welfare of the State. I fancy that she had never forgotten her strict and early lessons, the thoroughness which the Prince Consort¹ insisted upon in the dutiful discharge of her great position, aided and abetted as he was by King Leopold and Baron Stockmar's unfailing and, in the main, sensible advice. It is quite true that Lord Melbourne's easy-going ways may have acted as some antidote, but Lord Melbourne's influence was removed when he went out of office—the Prince Consort naturally supervened; besides, Lord Melbourne's easy-going ways were much more apparent than real. As a matter of fact, the Queen started her reign under a conscientious and hard-working mentor. But the Queen never learned Lord Melbourne's *dulce est desipere in loco*, a useful and healthy accomplishment.

There is much in a saying attributed by Madame Campan to Marie Leczinska, "Good kings are slaves and their subjects are free," which fits Queen Victoria. A full recognition of the Queen's masterly experience of constitutional and party government, its problems and considerations, of the unswerving industry she devoted to all and sundry, is attested by most of the statesmen—in their correspondence

¹ Again to quote Mr. Goldwin Smith, this time on the Prince Consort: "Highly cultured and all that sort of thing, but his importation of German ideas into the English Court made him unpopular. A martinet."

or in their diaries—who, during her long reign, had to do with the Queen in audience and Council. She knew the game. One cannot imagine her saying in a critical conjuncture—and several had to be faced in her time—anything like Louis XVI's comment to his family, on his return from signing the new Constitution, that he felt as if he had fallen off a steeple; or the bad advice tendered by Catherine II to Marie Antoinette in 1790—"Kings ought to proceed on their career undisturbed by the cries of the people, as the moon pursues her course undisturbed by the howling of dogs," would have quickly found its way into the waste-paper basket, which, Lady Ely told me, on an average working day was several times filled and emptied. To sum up my own notions of the Queen as a woman of affairs, it is that she was stiff in opinion but not inflexible, and that her views were always entitled to the respect we accord to a high sense of duty, to great painstaking, and to a long and varied contact with public men and public affairs. I also think that she derived advantage from having as her private secretary Sir Henry Ponsonby, a man of philosophic temperament and a Liberal—not indeed in party politics, which he eschewed, but of Liberal persuasions in all matters affecting the relation of Church and State and of Crown and Commons.

It is generally held that her regard for Lord Beaconsfield was to some extent due to the flattering

things he said to her. No doubt in some of his letters the bread seems a little overlaid with jam; for instance, in one he dilates on doing his best to promote and secure "the blessings of absolute government whilst duly safeguarding the Constitution." My impression is that the Queen took this sort of thing at its right value. In business no one would be less easily caught by such baby talk. I think, however, that Lord Beaconsfield knew how to put her at her ease, which Mr. Gladstone certainly did not. One way or another, I must have dined a great many times at the Queen's dinner party, and, as I have already said, I personally never heard her say anything at dinner which I remembered next morning. Her manners were not affable; she spoke very little at meals, and she ate fast and very seldom laughed. To the dishes she rejected she made a peevish *moue*, with crumpled brow more eloquent than words.

I have already paid my tribute to the excellence of the teas provided for the Lord-in-waiting in his own apartments; it would be ungracious not to record my favourable impressions of the cooking at Windsor. It did not perhaps exhibit the art or originality which Mr. Abraham Hayward declares to be essential, in his amusing essay;¹ but it was distinguished by unpretentious plenty. The wine—alas! I drank little in those days—was superlative.

¹ The Art of Dining.

Prince Christian, who dined constantly at Windsor, and was a gourmet of experience and education in English, German and French cooking—we were allies in our love for fox-hunting and horses—often called my attention to particular vintages and to particular dishes which might otherwise have escaped my uninformed attention. Cooks of the three nationalities were in charge of our digestions and our appetites, and on the Household dinner menu the name of the cook responsible for each dish, on a foolscap piece of paper, lay at the right hand of the Master of the Household, who presided and watched with satisfaction the hearty degustations of a rather silent company.

But to return to the Queen's table. One thing Prince Christian and we all admired was the four-year-old mutton. On one occasion Lord Hartington found his plate whipped away from him when only half-through a very useful-looking cut from a saddle, doubtless fed on the best of everything at Windsor, though the Queen preferred to think under the shadow of dark Lochnagar. The Queen, as I have said, ate quickly, and the servants had a menial trick of depriving us of our plates directly she had finished. On this particular occasion she had been satisfied with some green peas, the four-year-old mutton having been rejected with the *moue* I have already spoken of. She could dispose of peas with marvellous skill and celerity, and had got into conversation

with Lord Hartington, thus delaying his own operations. They got on very well together. Though Lord Hartington, like Peel and the Duke of Wellington, had neither small talk nor manners, yet he seemed to me less shy with the Queen than with his neighbours. This may be accounted for, perhaps, by their both being absolutely natural and their both being in no sort of doubt about their positions.¹

Well, anyhow, in the full current of their conversation the four-year-old mutton was taken from him. He stopped in the middle of a sentence in time to arrest the scarlet-clad marauder: "Here, bring that back!" We courtiers present held our breath—we were mostly of the deferential breed.

I had by this time picked up a sort of working philosophy of the Queen—I knew when she was amused; she was then—amused and pleased. I knew this by one of the rare smiles, as different as possible to the civil variety which, overtired, uninterested or thinking about something else, she contributed to the conventional observations of her visitors.

¹ In some perceptive pages Mr. Lytton Strachey reveals this:

"In one important particular she was neither aristocratic nor middle-class: her attitude towards herself was simply regal. She moved through life with the certitude of one to whom concealment was impossible, either towards her surroundings or towards herself. There she was, all of her—the Queen of England, complete and obvious; the world might take her or leave her; she had nothing more to show or to explain or to modify. In the same way Lord Hartington stood for England: for the Lion and the Unicorn, the governing families. In his turn, and more also, you could take him or leave him. He did not care."

CHAPTER XI

THE QUEEN

BUT to pass from the pleasures of the table to my sterner tasks. One of the Lord-in-Waiting's duties—indeed, the only one of any importance—was when the Queen held a Council and gave audiences to particular Ministers, or Churchmen, or lawyers. The audiences took place in a small, many-angled Gothic room with high, plate-glass windows. It opened off the great corridor. There was a small table near the window, and perhaps one or two chairs, but otherwise there were no signs of occupation or life—no papers, no pens, no inkstand, no suggestion of the transactions of State or any other kind of business. The Lord-in-Waiting, when the Queen was ready—I forget how we got to know this—knocked at the door and asked the Queen's pleasure. She would then say who she wished to see first. Her expression and way of giving her instructions never varied. It had a curious grace about it, as if for the moment she made one a partner in a State transaction. Rather to my surprise, the Lord Chamberlain had frequent audiences.

Mr. Gladstone came down often; 1880 to 1885

were very anxious years—Ireland, Egypt, General Gordon. To say the least of it, on public affairs Mr. Gladstone was not in favour. I remember very well one day when he came down with most of his Cabinet—it was at the time of the difficulties in Egypt and the bombardment of Alexandria. The Court gossip was that the Queen was intensely displeased and out of sympathy with Ministers. That day the audiences took place before luncheon: the party had to get back to the House of Commons.

Before being summoned to the Queen's presence, Ministers used to dawdle about in the corridor uneasily, pretending to admire pictures and buhl and ormolu cabinets.

I had by this time got to know Mr. Gladstone, and one of his peculiarities was that he looked upon the whole world as an ear. Given the mood, he would talk to an Eton boy with the same dynamics of argument and illustration as to, say, the Archbishop of Canterbury or Professor Huxley.

On this particular day, I could see that he was anxious and harassed: he looked ill, very white, untidy—hair, collar, necktie all going different ways—to use a French word, *ébouriffé*.¹ Thus, as we paced

¹ In the matter of dress Mr. Gladstone was unreliable, though always distinguished. But he could look better than anyone. I wrote to my mother, after hearing him present his first Home Rule Bill (1886): "He looked so nice with a yellow rose in his button-hole, that I felt he must be right." On that occasion he wore a suit of the black broadcloth he often commended, which told admirably against the large expanse of shirt-front and white cuffs, which stood out nobly from the tight sleeves of his frock-coat.

the corridor from end to end, I kept silent. At last, for something to say, I made some allusion to the china in one of the large *vitrines*. Alexandria, Egypt, bombardment were thrown to the winds; his tired eyes brightened with the preface that at one time of his life he had devoted very considerable attention to china. He knelt down beside the cabinet and entered into a long examination of glazes, marks, dates, relative merits of French and English clays, and so on. In the middle of this I was summoned to the Queen with some acerbity by the Groom-in-Waiting. Mr. Gladstone picked up his box and his papers and we retraced our steps. I knocked at the door for instructions. She wished to see Mr. Gladstone at once. By this time china had been banished to Jupiter and Saturn. Their interview must have been smoother than was anticipated. By luncheon-time Mr. Gladstone looked a different man. Ministers had come down in a special train, which awaited their return, timed to a certain hour. The luncheon was ample and protracted; a good many Ministers had come down. Evidently things had gone well; they dallied over their coffee and liqueurs with restored confidence and unclouded brows. Time went on. Mr. Gladstone suddenly looked at his watch; he had been talking incessantly on all kinds of subjects. He rose from the table; his mien was severe. "Gentlemen," he said, "we are bound in honour to the railway

company," and off they went like boys for the holidays.

But now to come to Mr. Gladstone's more personal relations with the Queen. At that time they were supposed not to get on well together. I think it is true that the Queen, like Sir Henry Ponsonby, found Mr. Disraeli far easier to speak to than Mr. Gladstone, "who," to quote Sir Henry, "forces you into his groove, while Disraeli apparently follows yours—almost," he goes on to say, "with overgeniality." But, as it happened, the accidents of the roster led to my being in waiting three or four times when Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone paid visits to the Queen—that is, staying a night or two—and as far as I could see they were on quite easy terms. Mr. Gladstone certainly did most of the talking, and I remember upon one occasion his rather overdoing his love for the precise and accurate.¹ It was at dinner. The Queen was under the impression that she had seen some particular Welsh hill from Eaton when she visited the Duke of Westminster. Mr. Gladstone declared this to be geographically impossible, bringing all kinds of arguments to batter upon the fairy fabric of her recollections. She liked to think she had seen this hill. The regal brow was

¹ In the autumn of 1887, I wrote to my mother from Mar Lodge: "This has been a very interesting week in my life, as Mr. Gladstone has been here all the time. He is certainly a Head-stone in the fabric of Humanity. Mr. Gladstone, above all, is a precisian, and one must be very careful in anything one says to him. It is curious how he examines and dissects the most trivial remark."

THE QUEEN

clouding. Had I been sitting next to him, I should have felt disposed to kick Mr. Gladstone under the table—not that this would have had the slightest effect. On he went till the Queen cut him short with a gentle inclination of the head: "That will do."

But what was remarked was that, with something of the same hardihood, Mr. Gladstone could always find subjects. Thus we were delivered from that reiteration of the same questions which Madame Campan observes seems inevitable with Royalty, and from the sterility of ideas which the same observer notices in Royalty and courtiers alike on public and private occasions. When Mr. Gladstone was there, there was indeed some adumbration of the possibilities of conversation.

Another evening their intercourse was almost racy. We had had some sort of concert, and refreshments of various kinds awaited the company at a buffet. Everybody was in a good humour at the concert being over and the prospect of going to bed. I heard Mr. Gladstone telling the Queen—he was drinking a large cup of strong tea—that he had just had a recent colloquy with his hatter. None of his hats fitted, as when he was in Office the bumps of his head enlarged. "Oh, Mr. Gladstone," the Queen said, "I can't believe that." But he stuck to it, in the lighter ironical manner which he sometimes resorted to and at times excelled in.

But we had evenings of another kind at Windsor.

One of these was devoted to a servant's ball, to which the ladies and gentlemen of the Household were invited, and which the Queen herself attended. Mr. John Brown acted as Master of the Ceremonies in the evening tartan of the Stuarts. The Queen, a terpsichore of the first order in her younger days—at least, so Mr. Strachey tells us—followed the evolutions of the dancers with a benevolent but critical eye. Deference was paid to the Highland character and preferences of Mistress and Household. We had what seemed to me incessant reels, Highland schottisches, and a complicated and sustained measure called "The Flowers of Edinburgh." Even with proficiency this dance requires constant attention, if not actual presence of mind, to be in the right place at the right moment—anyhow, more than I possessed in the mazy labyrinth. I was suddenly impelled almost into the Queen's lap with a push in the back and a "Where are you coming to?" It was Mr. John Brown, exercising his legitimate office as M.C. After a good many Caledonians, Mr. Brown came to ask the Queen, "Now, what's your Majesty for?" Mindful of her English subjects, the Queen suggested a country dance. This did not find favour. "A country dance," he repeated, turning angrily on his heels. However, we were then told to select our partners for "Sir Roger de Coverley." To my regret, I had no personal acquaintance with Mr.

Brown, but my valet often told me of pleasant evenings in his company. Storr appeared to be a favourite and Mr. Brown invited him to his room, where, over whisky and tobacco, they went into committee on the state of the nation.

Mr. Strachey gives a page or two to the permanence of the Prince Consort's influence in minor matters. He revives the gossip, which even in my time nobody believed, of the Prince's clothes being laid out and a hot-water can supplied in his dressing-room every evening. I personally do not believe a word of this. But in some ways his habits held good; for instance, in the shooting. In the shooting season, the Lord-in-Waiting was often invited by Prince Christian, but we only shot for three hours, from eleven to two. This was the Prince Consort's rule, who held that enough time had been given to relaxation. The rabbit-shooting in the Park was capital fun. Everton, the head-keeper, in green velvet and gold and corduroy, worked a team of ten or fifteen heavy lemon-and-white Clumbers, a survival of Georgian days. They got a good deal in the way, but looked well in the open woods about Cranbourne Tower. Everton worked them with an old-fashioned carter's whip, also, I should imagine, Georgian. He brandished it and cracked it round his head, apparently for no particular reason, frequent castigations of delinquents being carried on with a dog-whip by one of his satellites in the usual

way. Her Majesty supplied one with cartridges, and one was not allowed to tip the keepers. This was all to the good. "The bag," I wrote to my mother, "is always kept a secret from her, a curious piece of etiquette." That day we had shot six hundred rabbits and two hundred pheasants.

This is curious, but I attribute it again to the severe and earnest air of duty and service which the Prince Consort, after the first few years of married life, generated in the Royal Household. Amusements in moderation were approved, but they were not to be talked about as part of their everyday life. In the same way, I was told that my hunting from Windsor when in Waiting would be viewed with disfavour. It was for the same reason—that a day's hunting took up more time than should be devoted by a Knight of the Round Table to relaxation. There was, however, the more natural explanation of a Lord-in-Waiting in the '50's getting himself and his horse cast—a Royal horse it was, too—in a Berkshire ditch. The Lord-in-Waiting had to get home in a gig, and found that he had missed an unexpected audience, summoned by Her Majesty in view of an international crisis. I much regretted this unfortunate accident, and, indeed, seriously considered trying to get things put right. However, I was dissuaded by joint representations from the veterans of the Household, whose respect for institutions of this kind was unbounded.

On Sunday, at Windsor, service was held in the little chapel in the Castle. It was plain and dry; Lutheran hymns, but always an excellent preacher—in my time, I think, in a black gown. I see that Mr. Strachey, with a fine sense of what to touch and what to avoid, says nothing of the Queen's views on religious matters. But I remember that when things were going very badly for us in the early stage of the Boer War, it was suggested to her—by whom I know not—that a Day of Humiliation would be desirable. At the time the Queen was supposed to have rejoined: "Of Intercession possibly, but not of Humiliation." What she actually said was a direct negative—"When we are humiliated," with an emphasis on the "when."

It was about this time that one of her Ladies-in-Waiting was known to take a gloomy view of the war. "Lady So-and-so," the Queen said, but quite good-naturedly, "had better not come into Waiting just now."

All this that I have written about Windsor and Queen Victoria is first-hand. I have not gleaned from the literature of the subject—indeed, after Mr. Lytton Strachey's charming book, I should be gleaning after the gleaners—nor have I repeated what others have told me. I have written, as it were, only of things my eyes have seen and my hands have handled. That, at all events, has been my intention, not only about Windsor, but throughout this book. But I

shall make an exception, before I bring my pages to an end as a tale that is told, in favour of a letter written on the spur of the moment. It has a value of its own both by reason of its graphic style, its seizure of the opportune, and its close association with past days, which all combine to influence me to use it here.

Let me explain. Soon after we went out of Office in 1895—the Government had fallen in Ascot Week—the Queen graciously invited Lady Ribblesdale and me to stay from Saturday till Monday at Windsor. Writing to our eldest son, his mother describes her impressions thus:

“July 16, 1895.

“We enjoyed Windsor very much; it was so exciting, when we were all waiting in the corridor for dinner, to hear ‘The Queen!’ in a loud voice, and then to see a little old black-and-white lady, full of dignity, though so round, leaning on a beautiful Indian servant’s arm, dressed in scarlet with a striped turban and sash, such a picturesque couple; I longed for an artist to paint them. She stopped for a second on her way to the dining-room, and Lady Carrington and I hurried towards her and curtsied low and kissed her little hands, and she passed on. Then came Princess Beatrice, her husband, and the Duchess of Albany; then followed the ladies alone, and then the gentlemen. The Queen always has her own family next to her; it must be very dull. I sat between Lord Granville and Lord Chesterfield. Everybody has to talk very low to their next-door neighbour; no general conversation is allowed, so it makes the dinner not very lively. I longed to look at the Queen the whole time, she was so interesting, but had to turn away from her to talk to Lord Granville;

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however, I looked at her as much as I could without being rude. She had a quite low black dress on, well off her shoulders, and a diamond and sapphire necklace. She has an excellent appetite and all but went nap! After partaking of a stodgy trifle of jam and sponge cakes, she topped up with a finger biscuit, also of a sponge cake nature. After dinner she sits in the corridor and sends for people to come to talk to her. Standing up talking to a person sitting down makes conversation very difficult and I felt very shy. She began about Margot's¹ illness to me, and was very sympathetic about it, and asked me why I was so tall when my sisters were so small. Then she asked me to tell Tommy to come and talk to her, and she told him he would be very much missed, which was very nice.

"I hear at eleven she retires, but does not go to bed till about two o'clock in the morning, particularly at present, when she is tremendously interested in the elections. She is a wonderful woman."

¹Now Lady Oxford and Asquith.—B. W.

CHAPTER XII

GIBRALTAR

IN the *Bacchæ* the Chorus, in tentative mood, tries to arrive at the best way of solving the equation of Life.

What, they inquire, is the value of endeavour; how much do loveliness and grace count; where shall wisdom be found; what is the place of understanding? How is humanity to discover and define the true nature of Happiness? Is it a matter of accountancy or accident; is it an art or a gift; does it depend or is it original; is it an operation or a spirit?

The Chorus, *more suo*, mellifluously gives it up. Nothing certain about it all can be ascertained or laid down.

But if Professor Gilbert Murray's translation is to be trusted, and I feel sure it can, this abandonment of the inquiry provides the answer:

And they win that will or they miss that will,
And the hopes are dead or are pined for still;

But whoever can know,

As the long days go,

That to live is happy, hath found his heaven.

And as on a lovely December morning, two years ago, the s.s. "Melita" passed through the Straits on her

steadfast way to Bombay, it seemed to me that so it had been with my sojournings at Gibraltar—I had lived, and been happy.

As I looked again on the familiar outlines and landmarks, many scenes and incidents of past days and old friends formed up again—to use a barrack-square phrase.

Early in August, 1885, the hazards of promotion and politics had taken me back again to the 3rd Battalion Rifle Brigade, then stationed in the Town Range Barracks—a hottish and airless quarter at that time of year, rife with mosquitoes and redolent of goats and goats'-milk; but from the first I took to Gibraltar.

For one thing, most people rode about their business and pleasure in those days at the Rock; ponies were in the air: the life was equestrian. Then the manifold colours and character and dress and currents of the narrow streets, so cosmopolitan that the English looked and felt like the aliens: the Spaniards only there on sufferance and the Moors the overlords. I was reminded, though commerce was the object of this polyglot assemblage, of the Epistle for Whitsunday. Then the first part of my time was pleasantly—I hope usefully—occupied by the C.D. Garrison Course. If I passed this, in the fullness of time I might become a General; anyhow, I should not be expected to learn or know anything more: my military education would be completed.

And soon after I arrived, I was given command, with half a dozen pleasant subalterns, of the detachment at the North Front: out beyond the inundations. Here there was lots of air and space and sea and wind. As we were independent of gunfire and the shutting of the gates, so we were able in the hot evenings of August and September to start quite late for long rides into the wild Spain beyond San Roque.

But above and beyond all this, I look back to Gibraltar with an abiding affection for a gracious companionship. At Christmas-time Lady Ribblesdale joined me. I had taken some pretty rooms—two floors in a tall, newly-built yellow-washed house overlooking Rosia mole. The house stood at a slight angle, so we could look across to Algeciras facing us, to Ceuta and the Apes Hill southwards on the African side, and across the bay northwards to the Queen of Spain's Chair, San Roque, and the yellow and pink sand lines of the beach from Linea to the Orange Grove River.

She liked her time there: the rides and the hunting and the pleasant easy-going society and the excursions—especially a very good one we made with Major Buchle, the Colonial Engineer and an excellent water-colourist—to Tetuan. After January, the winter became for the most part fixed and lovely, and to live was happy.

In 1786, there was some question of giving up Gibraltar. Lord Shelbourne favoured abandonment;

Mr. Pitt opposed it. So did Mr. Burke. Speaking in the House of Commons, he declared the fortress of Gibraltar to be invaluable because impregnable, "a post of war, a post of power, a post of commerce, and a post which made us valuable to our friends and dreadful to our enemies; that which gave us command in the district of ocean where it lay; that which was incontestable evidence of our pre-eminence and power; that of all other places was what we ought, with the most religious determination, to maintain."

Here is another and more utilitarian conception of Gibraltar.

The day before I left England, asking a brother-officer whom I met in St. James's Street what sort of a place it (Gibraltar) was, "Capital!" he declared; "everything goes down in your mess bill." He was quite right. In those days there never was a place where so little ready money was needed, even your *pari mutuel* liabilities going through your mess bill.

But let me now recall my own experiences of the day-in day-out routine and amusements of life under the conditions laid down by Mr. Burke. They were luckily less formidable than they sound; in fact, the young officer was more right about it than the statesman.

Over seventy years ago, the Rev. Mr. Mackareth, scrambling after one couple of hounds on the Rock itself, started fox-hunting in Spain, and to Ranter

and Rookwood and this ordained sportsman must be assigned the establishment and present reputation of the Calpe Hunt. A good fox makes a good pack of hounds, and the Spanish fox is not all that can be desired. From dwelling in such stony rocks he has learned the habits of the conies and to dodge in and out of every hole and corner of a country of crags and crannies.

The Spanish horse (barbs have their qualifications and peculiarities, but we will stick to the horse of the country), takes little or no personal interest in the chase, and observes throughout a kind of enduring lassitude which is most fatiguing. There are good strains of English blood in his veins, but you will find it difficult to catch much of the English horse in the true Spaniard. He has never got away from his national type, the type we see in Velasquez's paintings. He stands away behind and under in front, his shoulders look bad and ride bad. If he is up to any weight, your breast-plate—you are more likely to want a crupper—rests on a swelling bosom the reverse of sympathetic to a judge of horseflesh.

Still, he has merits, and at last you get to like him. In his own way he is companionable and sensible as a poodle, and he won't really shut up. Very fond of his home, he will go there as fast as you please, always feed, and his legs, if you buy anything like the right quality, won't fill. On such places as the Queen of Spain's Chair you so often have to commend



“TAKING IT IN STYLE”

From a water-colour sketch by Lord Ribblesdale

his caution that you will come to condone his want of freedom. His action will annoy you at first. Be patient; extravagant dishing is the perfection of fashionable action in Spain, and he cannot forget all at once the lessons of a cruel youth. But this early training has forced him on to such hind legs as nature has endowed him with, and he is so far balanced that you can drive him along with a loose rein and teach him to "get away." Broken on a savage bit, he never touches his old tormentor; he so seldom pulls and never hangs—that most disagreeable habit of what is known as the snaffle-bridle hunter in this country.

But now let me turn off from hunting and horses into the domains of History—of history graced, animated and puzzled by the name of General Gordon.

CHAPTER XIII

ZOBEHR

ON the 3rd of March, 1884, General Gordon wrote to Lord Esher from Khartoum: "I am sorry you worry about me, for, D.V., I am all right. I am comforted that if I try and do my best one cannot fail. As for Zobeht, I wish with all my heart he was here. He alone can ride the Soudan horse, and if they do not send him, I am sentenced to penal servitude for my life up here."

Nothing came of Gordon's wishes. Early in 1885, Zobeht was deported to Gibraltar from Alexandria—according to his own account he had gone thither from Cairo to visit a noted Koran pundit anxious to clear up a matter of acute controversy in the sacred writings. In his absence all papers and correspondence in his house at Cairo were seized by the Government—it was rumoured that nothing very compromising was found, but action was taken, and without trial or inquiry or any reasons being given him, Zobeht found himself a prisoner inside a locked stockade, under strict surveillance and an officer's guard. Later on in that year, I took over charge of the captive and his establishment.

He was lodged in the Governor's cottage, the summer *dépendance* of Government House, perched on the bold cliffs between Europa Point and Catalan Bay, overlooking the Straits. It is a pleasant place—even the bored commanders of the guard used to admit its charm, its airiness and its scenery. The face of the rock was so steep that you could throw a stone into the sea from the veranda—some people could, anyhow. My duties were to administer all moneys allowed by the Treasury for Zobehr's house-keeping and other expenses, at that time a little over £2,000 a year; to forward and receive his correspondence through defined authorities; to attend to his wishes so far as might be, and—upon this Sir John Adye, the Governor, the kindest and most understanding of official gaolers, laid a particular stress—to do what I could to mitigate banishment from home and kindred. I was only too glad to do so—it became at once my pleasure as well as my duty.

Discounting the obvious uncertainty of his position, and allowing for that longing for a settled domestic life which has distinguished the elderly and patriarchal Oriental since Abraham dwelt under the oaks of Mamre, Zobehr was wonderfully contented. Indeed, when he used to say to me, touching his forehead, that to govern was very difficult, that all governments were alike in all the world and must have allowances made for them; that he knew he must be patient and wait—"Something," he said,

"is working in their minds"—there was something almost childlike about this acquiescence. He never or seldom laughed, but if he was in good spirits, which depended much upon the weather and the amount of sunshine, I felt him to be cheerful. Within the precincts of the cottage he enjoyed the necessities and some of the luxuries of life. If during the winter he often regretted a warmer sunshine, he appreciated English grates and English coal.

On fine days he was still sanguine about the possibilities of his being made use of and of being of use, and was fertile in plans and suggestions.

On the other hand, the grey, lashing rains and blurred horizons, with which all who have been quartered on the Rock are familiar, had the opposite effect. He would then become very downcast about everything. I think it was in February that we had a longish spell of this kind of weather—heavy winds driving the seas high and ceaselessly against the scarped cliffs, the spray salting his sitting-room windows; and he told me one afternoon that I was to pay no further attention to anything he said—that he could not have saved or helped "Mr. Gordon," as he always styled him, that he had been too long away from Khartoum, that other men had taken his place, and so on. However, the despondency vanished with a few halcyon days, harbingers of Southern Spain's climate in April and May, lovely and the recompense for these discontents.

Our conversations were carried on through an interpreter, by name Hamed. Hamed was by this time an oldish man; his beard, as he often told me, grew in the Zoological Gardens. In his youth he had come to England as the personal escort and attendant of the first hippopotamus which visited our shores, and he had learned English in a school in the Borough Road. He may often have heightened the stories of the wild men and the wild beasts of Zobeir's Bahr-el-Ghazal and Darfur days; but once the conversation touched upon the state of affairs and of feeling in the Soudan, Hamed did his utmost to catch the exact and innermost sense of what he had to translate. Of that, I have no doubt. A town Arab from Dongola, he always wore the dress of his people. The slave question roused him especially, and, polite and imperturbable as he usually was, so excited did he become over its complexities one day, that he dashed his turban half off his head. It is common knowledge that an Oriental who takes liberties with his head-gear is really moved.

To the last Hamed ceremoniously prefaced the more earnest allocutions of the Pasha with "Pasha says many compliments to yourself and your family," or "Pasha says how is your health," or "Pasha hopes God"—or, as he always pronounced it, "Gard"—"always protect you." But when we were on Gordon and Khartoum, slave-dealing and its sanctions

by the religion of Islam, or talking of Suleiman and Gessi, there was no doubt in my mind that both the Pasha and his interpreter did their best—both were in earnest—the former to get his views clearly and concisely conveyed and the latter to so convey them.

However, let me pass from considerations of his sincerity to what I gathered from these conversations. Zobehr himself always traced the general rising in the Soudan to alarm and misconception of British intentions—the same alarm and misconception which Zobehr thought were responsible for General Gordon's assassination. One wet afternoon, I took the words down in writing as spoken, and these notes are before me:¹

“When Mr. Gordon returned to Khartoum the people of the Soudan were pleased. They knew he would not allow unjust taxes or unjust duties, or oppress trade and poor men. Khartoum became quiet when he arrived. Many Arab sheikhs came into Khartoum to hear what was in Gordon's mind. Then came news of English and Egyptian soldiers at Suakin. The people of Khartoum began to fancy that Gordon had come to deceive them; that this time he was the servant of the English; that he was going to keep Khartoum quiet while the English troops fought with Osman Digna. They did not like it when they heard that Zobehr Pasha's promised

¹ Of course they are all translated by Hamed.

coming was no true promise. Instead came tidings of a stranger people in arms, who were going to sweep away the Arab and his religion. The sheikhs all left Khartoum for their own people and the Soudan rose. The rising had nothing to do with the Mahdi at first, but it was for the sake of religion. The Mahdi was said to be a holy man and the leader of a war of religion, and so they joined him."

It will be remembered that at this time in England much turned upon Zobeir's antecedents as a slave-dealer. Some people declared he was not a *bona fide* slave-dealer. Well, perhaps not—to the extent that the chairman of the Army and Navy Stores is not a grocer or a gunmaker, or that a director of a gold-mine is not a pick and shovel miner. But there can be little doubt that Zobeir had regulated and protected and policed, and indirectly financed, the slave trade in the Equatorial Provinces; that his settlement—Dem-Zobeir—was, as it were, the metropolis and the clearing-house of the slave industry; that the considerable revenue he administered during the years of his power and rule in the Soudan was mainly levied on duties of different kinds and degree imposed upon slave-dealers and caravans—Arab and Egyptian alike; and that his influence was due to his aptitude in systematizing a common and lucrative interest. No doubt Zobeir was a large trader in other things—in ivory, gums, ostrich feathers, gold dust, precious stones, and, I think,

rubber and hides to a small extent;¹ but the pulse of the machine was the slave trade.

Zobehr had started in a small way. He first went into the Bahr-al-Ghazal from his home, four or five hours' journey from Khartoum, as a boy of seventeen. He went there, as he described to me, "swinging his hands"—"We have the same expression," said Mr. Gladstone (I was telling him about Zobehr); "kicking his heels." But on this first visit he was attached to the personal retinue of an Egyptian slave-dealer, whose name I have forgotten.

The party got into trouble and conflict with a hostile tribe, and had to fight for their lives against a spear attack pushed right home to the frail walls of the small zereba which was the headquarters of their operations. The Egyptian dealer was a nervous man, "plenty shake and fear—his heart turned to water"—I am quoting Zobehr; but he was so much struck by Zobehr's courage and resource and the way he handled fire-arms that he at once took him into partnership. From this small beginning, Zobehr established himself as not only a potentate, but as the leading and only statesman—in the Western sense of the word—of the Soudan.

An Arab of the Arabs, Zobehr came of an old family. At the time of Lady Ribblesdale's departure

¹ He liked telling me about all this—and his story was mixed up with hunting elephants and adventures.

to England, Hamed informed me that the Pasha's heart, like the Psalmist's, was inditing of a good matter towards her. This took the form of an autograph letter of high esteem and consideration—it lives in the family album at Gisburne—and is, I am told, a good example of the calligraphy in which he excelled.

It is written in Indian ink and with the reed pen he used for his commentaries on the Koran, which absorbed much of his time at the Governor's cottage. This letter is indeed a handsome and authentic script.

Zobehr Pasha suffered from susceptibility to the claims and values of long descent. In this regard, at times, he felt uneasy about the Governor: "Is he good-bred?" was a frequent question he put to me about his visitors—even Lord Brassey, who paid him a long afternoon visit, mutually enjoyed, when the *Sunbeam* lay off Rosia for three or four days, was not immune. He always asked the same question about my horses, not easily answered, and even about a fine family of geese which Gunner Hunt, who looked after my own *dépendance* cottage and the garden, was rearing.

The accompanying translation of this heart-indited letter gives some idea of his own pedigree.

Translation.

High-bred, well taken care of by parents, a lump of diamond treasured in a casket—a diamond for a king and for no common people.

IMPRESSIONS AND MEMORIES

Your Excellency is a Queen's daughter—Lady Ribblesdale—always may God take care of her from sickness and trouble.

Your High Excellency—in spite of your Excellency—has asked me for my name and for the generations of my family; so to obey your order I have given you my name—Zobehr Pasha, son of Rahaman, son of Musroor, son of Ali, son of Mohammed, son of Suleiman. My titles go back to the Canaanite Arabs; and the Canaanites are the children of Hachem, the son of Abdanoof, son of Hosei, son of Kinara. My pedigree goes back to forty-five generations—but I will not go further. I was born 1264 of the Hejirah, the seventeenth day of Moharram, the ninth month, in a place lived in by my ancestors for eight hundred years, near Khar-toum about six hours.

Written by my own hand.

ZOBEHR RAHAMAN PASHA.

As I have already said, Zobehr Pasha had definite notions of the actual causes of the revolt in the Soudan. The slave question was at once religious and economic. To paraphrase and summarize what he told me (I again have recourse to my private notes): Taking away the slaves is associated with money, stopping the trade with religion. For instance, Reouf Pasha had slaves taken away from him by force, and many others, the owners not only not being compensated, but being thrown into prison: to get out they had to pay ransom. As to the second matter—religion—by the Mohammedan religion slaves are allowed; their position is laid down by the Koran, so trade is allowed. Later on you

(the English) may be able by degrees to do away with the present customs, but these at present are looked upon as sacred and as belonging to religion. The owner will have to be paid much compensation, and a fixed labour wage will have to be made throughout the districts.

Dr. Schweinfurth gives a description of his stay at Dem-Zobehr, in the Bahr-el-Ghazal, where he renewed his equipment and supplies, made the acquaintance of the Pasha, then at the zenith of his power and in the flower of his age, and was able to purchase a much-needed pair of boots, lucifers, tobacco, and cartridge paper for drying his botanical specimens.

Zobehr had surrounded himself with a court that was little less than princely in its details. A group of large, well-built square huts, enclosed by tall hedges, composed the private residence; within these were various state apartments, before which armed sentries kept guard by day and night. Special rooms provided with carpeted divans were reserved as ante-chambers, and into these all visitors were conducted by richly-dressed slaves, who served them with coffee, sherbet and tchibouks. The regal aspect of these halls of state was increased by the introduction of some lions, secured, to the Doctor's relief, by sufficiently strong, massive chains. Behind a large curtain in the innermost hut was placed the invalid couch of Zobehr, who had been wounded by an

arrow in a recent fight. Attendants were close at hand to attend to his wants, and a company of fakirs sat on the divans outside the curtain, and murmured their never-ending prayers.

To return to England: many here thought, and perhaps with reason, that in 1884 Zobeir might have been successful, as the only man who could act as a counterpoise to the Mahdi, and make a rallying-point for the tribesmen against him. Zobeir was represented as having no doubts on the subject; and that, as the conqueror of Darfur and the great notable in Kordofan, Berber and Khartoum, his influence was still thought very great.

I am by no means sure of this. Hamed certainly did not think so. He thought "Pasha away too long in Cairo." The conquest of Darfur in the '70's was almost ancient history in 1885, and the conqueror had been detained during the intervening nine or ten years, a prisoner at large in theory, but under constant and formidable surveillance, at Cairo.¹

Zobeir, I fancy, thought so himself. Moreover, bold man as he was, he must have felt rather nervous about it. Writing on the 19th September, 1884, Gordon says: "As for Zobeir refusing to come up,

¹ After conquering the Sultan of Darfur and killing both his sons—acting in concert with the Government, Zobeir had gone to Cairo to seek his reward. He claimed to be made Governor of the Equatorial Provinces and Darfur, but he took £20,000 with him to lubricate his contentions, and two lions as a present to the Khedive Ismail. Apprehensions, no doubt, of establishing an *imperium in imperio*, were entertained, and Zobeir never got back.

I put it down to some intrigue, and I consider he was forced into saying so.” Gordon was very near the mark. Zobebr told me that one day it was settled that he should go—as he understood Nubar’s¹ long objections had been removed—he received a call from an acquaintance the same evening, who warned him in a friendly but impressive way that, although he might start for Khartoum, he would not be allowed to get there. This, as Hamed explained, “Pasha not like—he think very bad,” and he accompanied these observations by gestures of strangulation, which signified the means which would be adopted to stay the traveller.

It is not my intention to consider whether or not Mr. Gladstone and his cabinet—they were certainly divided—should have given way to up-in-arms opinion in the country against the employment of Zobebr Pasha in any capacity, or whether any great volume of public opinion existed at all. It was asked how many people knew or cared what Zobebr was, in comparison to those who knew and cared about General Gordon. But Mr. Gladstone himself was under quite a different impression as to the extent of the public’s information. On my return from Gibraltar I had one or two longish talks with him on the possibilities. No doubt, as Mr. Morley tells us, Mr. Gladstone was “a convert to the plan of sending

¹ Nubar Pasha was the strong man of Egypt, an able statesman, and a staunch friend of the English.

Zobehr," but I recollect, as clearly as if it were yesterday, what he said to me about it all, and the reasons he gave me for the Government's non-compliance with Gordon's request at the time.

I have treated elsewhere of the Party system in which I was brought up and which I still appreciate and prefer. It is easy enough to estimate its disciplinary effect on the rank and file and regimental officers. It is not so easy to gauge its effects on such chiefs as Mr. Gladstone, Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury. It has been said that Mr. Gladstone, by an imperious blend of *graviora passus* and *altiora peto*, could and did withstand his Cabinets—that he could and did snap his fingers at the advice given by the wire-pullers in the constituencies. But that was not my impression in this conversation. But as I felt displeased and disappointed with Mr. Gladstone, I will keep what he said to myself.

I one day asked Zobehr whether he saw any way to a solution.

"Yes," he said; "let some wise man go who knows the English; let him tell the Arabs that war with the English people means ruin and trouble; that peace means trade up and down the Nile, the wealth of individuals, the prosperity of a nation. The Arabs are not a savage or a stupid people. They will listen to reason; but reason must speak in peace and not in arms, for the Arab is brave." "Are you the man?" I said—but he only touched his forehead

twice—two little pats—with a gesture I had got to know as “Chi lo sa.”

When I knew him, he was a striking-looking man, extremely spare and narrow and long. He usually wore a fez, sometimes a turban, and sometimes a silk skull-cap of outspoken magenta; occasionally cream and white flowing Arab raiment, and sometimes an undress, very light blue uniform of the Air Force shade, but usually a dark or mustard-coloured, narrow-cut overcoat and dark-striped trousers, with the strident patent-leather boots or shoes so much in vogue with Orientals when in semi-European civilian dress. He had finely-shaped, sensitive hands, with very long fingers, and long thin feet. His complexion was dark, verging, indeed, on black; the forehead prominent and skull-like, from the skin being very tight; the eyes sunken and rather lustreless. He wore no jewellery except a pale and opaque ruby ring which came from the Bahr-el-Ghazal, and which he gave to me when I left Gibraltar. He very seldom came out of doors with me into the grounds, for I think it made him realize unpleasantly the obvious confines of his circumstances, but his walk had that swift smoothness we call “stealing action” in a horse.

On the morning I bade him good-bye, his last words to me were sad and serious; he wished to swear on the Koran that they were true, and sent for witnesses, wax, his seal, and a little cresset oil

lamp: a signed paper was duly executed. I wrote it down as Hamed interpreted it. This is what he wished recorded:

"I am becoming an old man, and from now I only look forward to death; but before I die I should like to see the country of my young days quiet and peaceful and trade up and down the Nile. I may never go back to my own country; but if this ever comes to pass by the advice I now give, my people will bless and remember my name for good and for blessing. I do not wish to be made a great man. I shall have my reward and my blessing long after I am in my grave. If I can be of use, then it is well; if I cannot be of use, then it is well; but let me and my family depart from Egypt and from the Soudan. We will go to one of the holy cities—to Mecca, to Medina, or to Jerusalem—and so I will end my time."

Jerusalem must, I think, have been thrown in by Hamed out of compliment to my own religious persuasion. Possibly fragments of the familiar hymn which cites its golden glories and satisfactions still lingered amongst his Regent's Park and Borough Road memories.

When I got back to London I had the longish conversations with Mr. Gladstone about Zobeir which I have already touched upon, and I addressed the House of Lords at inordinate length on the wrongfulness of his detention without trial or ex-

planation. I also—foolishly—indicated the nature of Zobehr's suggestions for the better guidance of our affairs in the Soudan. But I got very little encouragement from Lord Rosebery. He was polite enough about the captive, but incredulous; a reader in *The Times* of the next morning good-naturedly amused itself at my expense. Never, said *The Times*, had weak case "a more ingenious and ingenuous advocate." However, Zobehr survived these efforts. He recovered full freedom, got back to Khartoum, and resided there for some years in esteemed retirement and in amity with all men.¹ Two or three times I heard from him through the kind offices of General Arthur Asquith, of whose friendship he spoke highly. In fullness of time and in the odour of sanctity he was gathered to rest with the many generations of his house.

¹ He went on with his commentaries—and I sent him a large folio MS book—he liked English writing-paper.

CHAPTER XIV

PARTY GOVERNMENT¹

A member of the Legislature, if tolerably observant, begins to see things with new eyes, even though his views undergo no change. Words have a meaning now, and ideas a reality, such as they had not before. He hears a vast deal in public speeches and private conversations which is never put into print: the bearings of measures and events, the actions of parties, and the persons of friends and enemies are brought out to the man who is in the midst of them with a distinctness which the most diligent perusal of newspapers will fail to throw around them.

It is access to the fountain-heads of political wisdom and experience, it is daily intercourse of one kind or another with the multitude who go up to them, it is familiarity with business, it is access to the contributions of fact and opinion thrown together by many witnesses from many quarters, which does this for him.—CARDINAL NEWMAN: *University Sketches*, 1902.

ON looking back on what I have written, will anybody read it? Will anybody condescend to things of such low estate? The worst of it is, too, that there is nothing better to come. Æneas, pressed by Dido, hesitated to embark on the story of his life. But, after all, Æneas had much to tell—big things leading to great results. Nothing of

¹ It should be remembered that since my father wrote this chapter many political changes have taken place.—B. W.

this kind stands to my credit; so far from that, my memory seems to be the playground of trivialities and odds and ends.

I took my seat in the House of Lords on February 19, 1877. So did one of my oldest friends, Lord Sandhurst. My mother records the event in her diary as "a very quiet affair." Lord Beaconsfield took his seat the same day. This may have had something to do with this quietude.

I remember nothing about the "quiet affair," except Lord Beaconsfield's appearance on the front bench. He absorbed my attention.

I will not burden these pages with any lengthy observations on the party politics of forty years ago. But, much to my own and my family's surprise, when Mr. Gladstone came into office, in 1880, he offered to submit my name to the Queen for a Lord-in-Waitingship. I remember a graceful sentence or two in an otherwise formal communication to the effect that, in view of my close connection with Lord John Russell, he derived a particular pleasure in making this suggestion. The Queen approved, and so I got a start, and became a partaker of all the opportunities so felicitously described by Cardinal Newman.

By this time I had lost, if not forgotten, any Whiggish propensities I had picked up at Pembroke Lodge, or had been nurtured in by Mr. Hancock at Leamington.

Politics are not congenial to barrack squares, ante-rooms and station life in the Punjab. Nor do I remember mess-room conversation running into the channels of affairs; we confined ourselves to the topics of our everyday life. Two or three of my seniors at Umballa came of political stock: they doubtless followed the course of home and foreign events with an eye on the ballot-box; but, speaking generally, regimental society at that time—it was much to my mind—confined itself to damning Cardwell, regretting purchase, denouncing examination and mistrusting Wolseley. We left it at that.

When I succeeded, a near relation advised me to make some use of my seat in the House of Lords. “You will find it,” he said, “a pleasant lounge.” But I did not follow his advice; indeed, after being captured by Lord Cork for a Private Bill Committee, I seldom visited the House.

In 1885 we went out, and I rejoined my regiment at Gibraltar; but in 1892, on Mr. Gladstone’s return to power, I was given the Buckhounds. The Administration fell in 1895; but, during this period, I answered for the Board of Agriculture in the House of Lords, and when Lord Rosebery became Prime Minister in March, 1894, he asked me to do the Irish work, which Lord Acton wished to be relieved of. Thus, for some years of my life, roughly from 1880 to 1895, I inhabited, politically speaking, a Party soil and inhaled a Party climate; even longer than

that, for although, to use a pretentious form of phrase, the close of my official life dates with the fall of Lord Rosebery's Administration in 1895, I continued to act as Chief Liberal Whip in the House of Lords, but without place or office, up to the passing of the Parliament Act.

During the years from 1880 onwards, Parliament has been urged in many quarters to render services never previously attempted. I remember Mr. Asquith¹ actually saying that politics were becoming less a question of parties and organization; politics, he declared, were really the instruments of social well-being. Anyhow, social well-being afforded "programme" opportunities to both sides of outbidding one another in remedial and protective social legislation. It is difficult to say whether measures of this avowed character are responsible for the uncomfortable condition of industrial affairs at present, but anyhow, both Parties, in and out of office, have recognized their necessity. Writing to my mother in March, 1894, in this sense, I say: "Both parties act up to the tendency, almost the exigency, of the days we live in. Lord Rosebery is, I think, a man who feels this tendency and exigency more cogent than, for instance, Mr. Gladstone." We have moved still further along these lines now.

Take for instance the right to strike. It has always been a natural rough and ready right, but

¹ Since created Earl of Oxford and Asquith.

we have now not only defined it, but protected and enjoined it by the law of the land. Direct action is constitutional. The *Gaulois* observed that recently militant revolutions could be dealt with, but to deal with revolutions of *les bras croisés* was another affair. In mythology Saturn eats up his children. Let us call Capital Saturn: let us admit that in the past Capital has been a greedy parent, but now the children are eating up Saturn, and eating him up with impunity and the full sanction of Acts of Parliament.

People were not agreed as to how much, or how little, the State should interfere in the working relations of Labour and Capital—in questions affecting supply and demand, freedom of contract, employers' liability, and the perplexities which inevitably crowd in upon highly-civilized, partly-educated and strictly-graded societies. But, allowing for divergencies of method and opinion, it was generally conceded, and the concession was affirmed by practice, that *laissez faire* in the old sense was done for, and that the State was to interfere, or at all events intervene, as a regulator. But, even then, it was contended that wages were no longer to depend upon output, or demand, or overhead costs, but on the wage-earner's standard of comfort. The operation of natural laws—such, for instance, as supply and demand—was not disputed, but it became the business of the State so to doctor and tame them as to break them in to these new conceptions.

But I cannot agree with Mr. Asquith that the domination of parties and organization was weakening. So far from that, this period of our Parliamentary and political history, say from 1880, is a period which I imagine will take rank in history as reaching the high-water mark of a system of government organized by Party—of statesmen controlled, of Oppositions inspired, of Governments governed by Party.

People of my age will associate this consummation with the names of Chamberlain and Dilke and Schnadhorst; with all we understand or fail to understand by the Caucus and its scientific methods. Of course, there were sectional divergencies of varying influence or force; take, for instance, the Liberal Unionists of 1886. They bellowed their professions to stand out select and apart. It did not succeed. They became either quickly merged in the Conservative Party or returned on suitable pretexts to Mr. Gladstone. Later on we had the secession of the Liberal League. Here, again, divergencies of substance animated the breasts of Liberal leaders and menaced the solidarity of Liberal organization. Yet when Official Liberalism and Party funds won the election of 1905, the sweets of office and the Party system proved too advantageous or too powerful for the secessionists. They came into line; Lord Rosebery alone held out, and found himself abandoned—as it always seemed to me, without

warning—by the Triumvirs with whom he imagined himself to be identified.

But, anyhow, to pass from the more particular to the general, the long wanderings in the wilderness brought most sheep back to the fold.

I personally have no objection to Party government—would that we could get back to it; but my observation of the working of the machine leads me to think that Party loyalty leads to a great deal of personal distrust, jealousy and intrigue. Possibly this may be confined to public affairs, but in effect it often amounts to private dislike. Ministers are as jealous of each other as foxhounds. To parade the high and cordial opinions they entertain of each other on the floor of Parliament and the platform, to asseverate unswerving loyalty to colleagues, is part, and a seemly part, of the game. As a people we are fond of this sort of protestations—Mr. Pecksniff was thoroughly English—but given the opportunities afforded by arm-chairs, a quiet room and a good talk with strong-backed Party politicians, one is impressed in a very different way by the mistrust they feel for their colleagues or leaders¹ and the misgivings they entertain for their measures.

Party, with all its defects, has obvious qualities as an instrument of government. Best of all, it is well understood by the people of this country.

¹ Thus Mr. Gladstone writes to Lady John Russell in October, 1889: “the political characters which attract love are not very numerous.”

It can point to a long inheritance of custom and tradition. "The establishment (in 1696) of the first really united Ministry in English history was the greatest indirect result of the Revolution. It was next found that the Party in power must be the party with a majority in the House of Commons."¹ No doubt heaps of treatises have been written on the history and evolution of Party, but this quotation puts it simply and naturally. William III, a foreigner, in his letters to Avaux, recognizes forces we are all familiar with. On one occasion he writes: "Les esprits s'aigrissent de plus en plus"; another memoir-writer, I forget who, a little later on, at a time when circumstances abroad required union and the sinking of Party differences at home and all the rest of it, writes to a correspondent that Whigs and Tories are as unlikely to come together as parallel lines.² In 1760, Horace Walpole writes to Mr. Montague: "I have a maxim that the extinction of Party is the origin of Faction."³

Other advantages may be cited for the Party system. Its operations profess, at all events, to be carried on in the sight of all men; at public meetings,

¹ "History of England," York Powell and Tout.

² One Duke of Devonshire declared it was the boast and glory of his family that no member of it had ever voted with the Tories.

³ Thus *The Times*—writing on June 11th, 1921—of the helplessness and shortcomings of the coalition in the matter of National Finance; and especially its waste and extravagance, says: "The remedy must first of all be sought in the disentangling of an alliance which obscures the principles of parties and confounds their policies."

by speeches up and down the country; by picnics, programmes and leaflets; even bazaars hardly escape a douche from the Party shower-bath. What is more, it can be made to pay its way. Peerages, baronetcies, knighthoods, a frequent Privy Councillorship, and other protean rewards of place or patronage stimulate zeal and stoke the engine.

At the risk of being called an eighteenth-century jobber, I concur in a saying of Lord John Russell that the sick and wounded in Party warfare must be properly tended and rewarded; so must the obedient and the brave. Apart from that, I have no great opinion of the effect of Party on individuals. Setting aside their characteristics as private persons, as friends, or hosts, or husbands, or fathers, or foxhunters, the effect of Party is to develop mediocrity. As the Party man acquires the jargon of the programme, so he becomes more and more adaptable or adapted to its commonplaces and shibboleths. A loss of ideas corresponds with the loss of independence. Not, after all, that this matters. It is on the permanent officials, on the Civil Service at home and abroad, that I myself rely for the good government of the realm.¹

A Whipship in the House of Lords amounts to very little of interest or influence, *per se*. In

¹ General Gordon writes to Lady Burton in 1880: "Lord Hammond rules with a rod of iron. If your husband would understand that the Foreign Office is at present Lord Hammond and that he is ill, he would see that I can do nothing."

practice and effect there is little or no patronage or wire-pulling. The proselytizing of my younger days—that is, getting hold of new successions, the cajoling of waverers, at which Lord Cork was a robust adept,¹ instigated by Lord Granville, who then led the Liberal Party in the House of Lords—all this had been almost useless since the Home Rule cleavage and the gulf it fixed between the sheep and the goats.

The Chief Whipship is invariably accompanied by Household office; but in 1905, when Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman came in, I did not, for private reasons,² see my way to accepting office of any kind or colour. However, it was still desired that I should act as Whip. So, after some difficulties being raised by one or two Nestors in the Cabinet, on grounds of precedent and on the hazards of a non-placeman Whip becoming unmanageable, or, worse still, vocal, it was decided to take the risks and to fall in with my offer to continue, anyhow, till things got properly going. I thus reserved my independence.

We had been out of office for a long time; al-

¹ For some years after Mr. Gladstone's espousal of Home Rule there was little to be done in this line. I remember when the Liberal Party in the House of Lords could only count on twenty-seven votes on a division, including Ministers and placemen. In 1894 the minority had only risen to forty-three.

² By this time I had a good deal of interesting City work; I liked it and could not afford to give it up. Very properly it had been decreed that one had to choose one or the other. I had a wise, witty letter from Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman about it all. There was no way round the implacable virtue of the Liberal Party.

though never a proficient in procedure, I knew something first-hand of the Committee work of the House. Taking the House at large, I knew enough Front Benchers, and enough Back Benchers to make myself useful. The traditions and methods of Lord Redesdale, Lord Cork and Lord Monson, in which I had been trained, still counted for something, and without putting it too highly it was thought that I might know more of the usage, and, indeed, of the peculiarities of the House of Lords at large than any of the younger Liberal Peers at that moment available.

Thus, one way or another, first as a placeman, afterwards as Chief Whip,¹ I got to know more or less a good many Ministers *in esse* or *in posse* and the leading Party men—some of them socially—in both Houses, and on both sides. I repeat, it was the high-water mark age of Party in Parliament, the Press and the country.

“Il n’y a pas de principes, il n’y a que des événements; il n’y a pas de loi, il n’y a que des circonstances; l’homme supérieur épouse les événements et les circonstances pour les conduire.”

So Vautrin cools off M. de Rastignac’s ardour for the ideal in Balzac’s novel: and Vautrin, to my mind, says the last word on Party—or, rather, on its practice and application and methods.

To turn from fiction to fact here is an extract

¹ 1896 to 1907.

from a long letter I received in my capacity of Whip, after the Licensing Bill was thrown out in the Lords, from a Radical M.P. of mettle and character. It gives a good idea of Party fighting and Party ideals. The House of Lords, its reduction to servitude or impotence, was at that time the Party ticket: "Not that I think they (the Lords)," says my correspondent, "at the present moment are in danger, for if there is going to be a fight, I do not think it wise to fight someone stronger than oneself. It will not do to fight over the Education Bill or the Licensing Bill. . . . Some other question must be found to fight the Lords on. I assure you that, although there has been a loud cry 'to arms,' strange to say I have seen no one rushing about. Still, the best thing to do is to keep on shouting, and then we may be able to persuade the crowd that there is something in it."

CHAPTER XV

THUMBNAIL PORTRAITS

“IF we look into the bulk of our species they are such as are not likely to be remembered a moment after their disappearance. They leave behind them no traces of their existence, but are forgotten as though they had never been. They are neither wanted by the poor, respected by the rich, nor regretted by the learned. They are neither missed by the commonwealth nor lamented by private persons.” In my time I have come across distinguished exceptions to Addison’s incontestable generalization.

What, I wonder, is the best way of introducing eminent persons to notice in recollections of this kind. Some years ago, in the '80's, *The Daily News* started a descriptive reporter. This gentleman dealt in equal parts with the psychology and appearance of his subject. The Liberal side, with whom the paper agreed, was drenched with praise; the Tory side came in for the very reverse. This new method of, as it were, putting and dressing-up the men on the stage of their measures was not in Mr. John Morley’s way. “We are suffering,” he said to me

one evening, "from a new portent, the descriptive reporter. 'There was a look of triumphant intellectuality in his eye as he rose.' This" added Mr. Morley, "applies to our old friend Mr. ——" (an official Radical of no significance). Here, I suppose, is one way of doing it. Another way is in Mr. Rogers's *Table Talk*, another Sir William Fraser's, another Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff's; but perhaps the best way for me is to adopt Sterne's advice to the young disciple—to write down the first sentence and to trust to God Almighty for the second.

I have alluded elsewhere to Lord Beaconsfield's first appearance in the House of Lords. By that time the vesture had waxed old, he looked ill and tired, but he made his colleagues—with the exception of Lord Salisbury—appear insignificant.¹ He sat with his arms folded and his head bowed on a large expanse of undulating shirt-front; he wore a light pair of trousers, I think with a broad stripe down the side, a fashion of those days; his frock-coat very open in front and buttoned very low down at the waist, in the manner of statesmen; a whisp-like, but effective, black tie. Once or twice he put up his eyeglass with the dexterity of long habit—it amounted to a gesture to invite attention—but the pose of impassive superciliousness was in no way disturbed, nor did he appear to take any sort of interest in the

¹ In this respect we Liberals could claim an advantage; for instance, Lord Spencer, Lord Carlingford and Lord Halifax.

proceedings or composition of the Upper House. This, perhaps, is not surprising, in view of the good fun he makes of the House of Lords in "The Young Duke," which readers of his political novels will remember. The Duke of St. James has just taken his seat. "He heard a debate. We laugh at such things in the Upper House, but on the whole the affair is imposing, particularly if we take part in it." Various speeches are then summarized: the Leader of the House speaks at length, "all constitution and currency," and the Duke discovers that "the Lords do not encourage wit . . . when all this was going on [the debate], some made a note—some made a bet—some consulted a book—some their ease—some yawned, a few slept." But to a slight extent we are rehabilitated by the author later on. "Yet, on the whole, there was an air about the assembly which could be witnessed in no other in Europe. Even the most indifferent looked as if he would come forward, if the occasion should command, and the most imbecile as if he could serve the country, if it required him."

Although in those days I was soldiering in country quarters and hardly ever went to the House of Lords, I was fortunate in hearing Lord Beaconsfield make his most noteworthy speech on Kandahar. It seemed to me rambling and ragged in many ways, but this, perhaps, helped by contrast the

Waddesden.
Nov. 16. 1884.



A ROTHSCHILD PENSIONER AT WADDESSEN

From a water-colour sketch by Lord Ribblesdale

dramatic force of the climax. This was on March 4, 1881, on the evacuation of Kandahar, which he had to defend: "My Lords, the key of India is in London: the majesty and sovereignty, the spirit and vigour of Parliament, the inexhaustible resources, the ingenuity and determination of your people—these are the keys of India." At the time the House did not know that this passage decked a borrowed plume. It had a great effect. Whether Bismarck was right or wrong about Lord Salisbury, I know not, but he was right in his estimate of Lord Beaconsfield: "The old Jew means business."

I remember on one occasion—there had been a good deal of cross-voting on non-party measures, and Lord Beaconsfield had been voting with us—I happened to go through the Lobby in his company. "How will it go?" he asked me. "I think we are beaten again," I answered cheerfully. For a moment he laid his hand on my shoulder. "Always remember it is something to have belonged to a succession of glorious minorities." This surely is the Disraeli of his political novels. For the rest, our acquaintance was of the slightest. My wife and I met him but very occasionally at dinner, and once or twice in country houses. We were both fascinated; what by? I can hardly say, but there was something about him which had the same effect on us as the boa-constrictor on the rabbit in the earlier stages of their acquaintance—something between alarm,

admiration and awkwardness. The last time we met was at Bagshot. It was a week-end party. Lord Beaconsfield sat each night next the Duchess of Connaught. I observed nothing like conversation pass between them.

On the Sunday, a telegram arrived just after church announcing the assassination of the Emperor of Russia. Lord Beaconsfield did not appear till luncheon-time. As we sat down the Duke and Duchess expressed suitable sentiments. Lord Beaconsfield gave vent twice to a sombre "Deplorable," and did not allude further to the subject. He relapsed into complete silence, much in the House of Lords attitude I describe, characteristic of the Jewish gloom appropriate to the event. But all this, this visit to Bagshot, was a very little time before his own death, and having regard to the extreme agreeableness and cleverness of his hostess the taciturnity may be ascribed to ill-health and old age.

My personal acquaintance with Lord Salisbury was of the slightest, thus my impressions are of necessity external; but to borrow a term which seems to be preferred now to "impressionist" by the critics of modern art, Lord Salisbury was an "expressionist." He expressed bulk—demobilized bulk; except for the quivering of the knees, which may have been involuntary, but which I came to connect with some unexpected or critical turn in the business of the

House or an Opposition attack. Once seated in static dignity, he never moved from his seat or stirred in it.

Visitors to the House of Lords are often impressed by the restlessness of Peers, their running in and out, and so on; but this was not Lord Salisbury's way: his crimson seat, as I say, seemed to "demobilize" every activity. Lord Coventry has often regretted to me the cruel treatment his hat received. He never wore it in good old House of Lords fashion, which has faded, alas! from the Front Bench, but on sitting down shoved it under the table amongst Blue books, volumes of *Hansard*, and other foreign elements hostile to his hatter and his own appearance when he resumed it.

Only once in a number of years can I remember seeing Lord Salisbury use a note. On that occasion, he took a small bit of folded paper from his waistcoat pocket; this was so unusual that everybody pricked up their ears, but it only turned out to be two or three figures. Blue books, Reports, Clauses of Bills, he seldom consulted or referred to.

I should think that intellectually he could have knocked most people out on Clauses in Committee; but the Committee stage seemed not an arena to his liking. The Minister in charge of the Bill, or some other competent person, was deputed for that kind of thing. Of course, in Committee, Lord Salisbury had sometimes to intervene, but on those occasions

he spoke to what he conceived to be the basis and bearing and broad sense of the measure; that was his appeal before a division upon a Committee point. I have seen him flutter and finger the blue pages of a Bill in Committee, but very seldom; for one thing, he never put on glasses, and I dare say that prevented him doing so.

The way public men prepare their speeches, the extent to which they prepare them with a pen, and so on, has always interested me. For a really great occasion Lord Salisbury's speeches were, I believe, carefully prepared, but nothing was ever written. On his Home Rule speech in '93, Lady Frances Balfour told me that this was the case. It was all done by thinking it out, by saturating his mind with what he wished to say and nothing else. He had secluded himself, to all intents and purposes, from the family circle he adorned and stimulated by his conversation on the affairs of the day. His sons and daughters were invited to controvert, discuss and suggest without any respect of persons; it was the republic of able and critical minds working on the raw or finished material of affairs. But when Lord Salisbury was in for a big thing there was a tacit understanding in the family that politics in their direct or indirect sense were not to be raised at meals, when these great disputations usually took place. However, I am speaking from hearsay, and may be overstating this honourable understanding. Anyhow,

when Lord Salisbury spoke, every sentence seemed as essential, as articulate, as vital to the argument as his various members are to the body of an athletic man.

When he was seven years old his mother, a lady of talent, used to read him Addison's and the other *Spectator* essays. This early grounding on classical models may have had something to do with the poise and balance and a certain texture of irony which he employed. But, fervent admirer as I am of Lord Salisbury's speaking—at his best I preferred him to all others in the years I am recalling—I should not have called his style Addisonian; possibly it reminded one rather too much of a caustic page in the great days of *The Edinburgh Review*.

I have referred to the sense of bulk I associate with Lord Salisbury in the House of Lords. He was clothed unassumingly—trousers, always of a dismal grey, corresponding to a waistcoat of the same material. The coat was invariably a modified sort of frock, of shiny broadcloth of the Early Victorian period, which also found favour with Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Bright, Lord Kimberley and Lord Derby. This particular broadcloth was a subject to which Mr. Gladstone had given much attention. He talked to me one day about this at length. Broadcloth had fallen away from grace: it had lost its reliability. There was a tendency, he averred, to wearing white at the edges, even round the stitches; this never

happened in his younger days. His brow clouded, his eyes saddened, as he told me all this.

But to return to Lord Salisbury; I remember his telling me that he was in for being painted by Herkomer; he felt nervous about this. Herkomer, he understood, devoted much attention to the feet of his sitters, "and," said Lord Salisbury, "my boots are not my strong point."

But, indifferent to clothes, as are the lilies of the field to toiling and spinning, I was much surprised to find him critical and careful over a hairdresser's treatment of his beard. It was a very hot afternoon, no one about in the street. I went into Mr. Penhaligon's shop in St. James's Street. I had noticed, but merely as a form in a chair, the only other occupant clothed in white samite; the hairdresser was in my way—the veiled figure's beard was evidently being trimmed. Then, to my surprise, I identified Lord Salisbury. This, however, was not the surprise; it came when the hairdresser, with all the grace of his artistic profession, invited approval. Lord Salisbury directed him in a manner worthy of a dandy with side-steps and smiles, artist and subject both gazing fixedly in the ample mirror. Lord Salisbury proved himself appreciative of his fine appearance.

"Just a little more off here," and he indicated the exact spot.

In my young days, debates were chiefly conducted by the Front Benches on both sides. It was not the

fashion for average Peers to take any part in them, except, perhaps, in the Committee stages of a Bill. But this did not apply when Irish affairs occupied our attention. The sessions of 1880 to 1885¹ were largely devoted to Ireland. Lady Gregory, I see, in her "Life of Sir Hugh Lane," fixes ten years as the duration of the Land War. Thus we heard a great deal from noble Lords from Ireland. Able, original, and eloquent, well-schooled in their subject by the uses of adversity, they animated and monopolized a great part of the time of the House.

Lord Salisbury never seemed to me comfortable with the Irish Peers or the Irish Question. I do not think he understood Ireland, Irish land, or the Irish character.² All these things were apart from anything which went on at Hatfield or in the logical bosom of the Cecil family. Upon one occasion, I remember, it was desired that he should receive a small deputation of Irish landlords. It was at the time of the Ashbourne or Wyndham Land Act. I was the channel of communication. He did not relish the idea, and exhibited an amusing uneasiness, hoping that, whatever was done about it, Lord Leconfield might not

¹ It was an agrarian rather than a "national sentiment" session, with lots of coercive and a little remedial legislation in alternation.

² Did anybody else? Lord Rosebery and I happened to be washing our hands before luncheon in a house he then rented in Berkeley Square. We—the Liberal Party—were well in the thick of the Irish bog, i.e. it was after Mr. Gladstone's espousal of Home Rule. "I wonder," he said, "whether anybody understands the Irish Question. I'm sure Mr. Gladstone does not."

be one of the deputation. "Lord Leconfield," he said to me, "always makes me feel nervous." This, at all events, showed insight or instinct. Lord Leconfield hardly ever spoke in the House, but his idol was Land in all its complexions and aspects. Cool, critical and shrewd, looking on the personal administration of great estates in Ireland and England as a profession, I can understand his being an awkward customer for a permanent official or a Minister on the "Nemo me impune lacessit" ground he would take up as the guardian of inherited duties and interests. Nothing technical would escape him; no ear would be lent to compromise, no favour, partiality or affection allowed. Land was a business, an industry, a system. On Land he spoke from practical contact and knowledge, with authority, and not as the scribes of the Irish Office or the Government's Party advisers or the sentimentalists.¹

But to return to debates in the Lords and the changes which I notice to-day. To my mind, these are to the good. If anything of interest is down on the paper, a good many back-bench peers take part. Thus the sittings are longer and more varied and better attended. This is partly due to the encouragement given in my time, as Whip, by Lord Spencer, Lord Lansdowne, and Lord Crewe, to discover new speakers and bring unstereotyped minds to bear upon our discussions.

¹ To a great extent Lord Leconfield's were English-managed estates.

This good habit has survived pre-war days. Indeed, under the Coalition our debates resemble general conversation, the Government Front Bench taking little or no part and presenting a derelict appearance, the Opposition Front Bench being heavily manned by the strange bedfellows a Coalition throws together. Former or possible leaders on both sides, in Party days, are always on their legs upon such pretexts as fear of their silence being misinterpreted; of having spoken on the subject at some other time; of having served on some long-forgotten Committee, and so on.

To put it shortly, the Front Benches are no longer Olympian. There is more give and take, and from time to time a rough-and-tumble debate carried on mainly by non-official peers braces a rather relaxing climate. To this desirable state of affairs the Woolsack, to my mind, has largely contributed. The House is no longer tongue-tied by authority or fashion.

No greater contrast can be imagined than the Woolsack manner of Lord Buckmaster and Lord Birkenhead to that of Lord Chancellors Selborne and Cairns. Great actors of noble parts, Lord Cairns and Lord Selborne spoke not from the floor of the House, but as from Sinai, and as interpreters of what should or should not be done, backed by much the same authority.

I heard Lord Cairns make one of the finest

speeches ever listened to in the well-listening House of Lords, as I have known it; but the contrast in style and way with the House, as compared to the style and way of the later distinguished occupants of the Woolsack is, in my view, so conspicuous as to be significant—of what I cannot exactly say, but perhaps of the broadening out of our institutions. There is something about it in the nature of loosening a Close Trust or of opening Belgrave or Grosvenor Square to the public. By the ease of their demeanour, by speaking to us as men of the world, as passengers “in the world’s most crowded streets,” Lord Buckmaster and Lord Birkenhead have done much to liberate and to cheer the House at large.

CHAPTER XVI

HOME RULE AND THE BUCKHOUNDS

IN 1892 Mr. Gladstone got back to power. On August 4th *The Times* wrote that the majority of forty in the hands of a minister directing a mixed and unstable following in an ambitious and far-reaching policy would prove a precarious position, hard to command. When he came to filling up the Household Appointments, Mr. Gladstone offered me the Buckhounds. My mother was delighted with this preferment, but found herself so much in agreement with *The Times* that she wrote in her diary, quoting the passage from the leader, "It is to this policy that Tom is now going to commit himself. I find it difficult to follow his reasons for forsaking the Liberal Unionists, who, I believe, represent the honest and moderate section of the great Liberal Party." Whatever these reasons were, perish the thought that they had any connection with a pleasant appointment, and hounds and horses.

However precarious the position of the Government, it was nothing to that of the Buckhounds.

In proposing the office to me Mr. Gladstone had written me a long letter about it all, explaining the position; that I might have, though it was not at all certain, to prepare all those committed to my charge for their latter end. At the same time he indicated in a devious way, and with many qualifications, that if I did this cleverly, something or other might emerge, as it were from their grave, which would provide me with a post and a salary that I might be willing to consider. This letter is an example of Hamilton's "Parliamentary Logic"—"The best verbal fallacies are those which consist, not in the ambiguity of a single word, but in the ambiguous syntaxes of many put together." But Mr. Gladstone and I understood one another.

The Buckhounds were actually under sentence of dissolution, if not of death. The Party newspapers disapproved of them, so did Sir William Harcourt, and most of our most trusty leaders. They cost the tax-payer money—hunting the carted deer was cruel—hunting generally was associated with Tory principles. It was kept up by grinding the faces of the poor, or at least breaking down their fences and cutting up their fields, and so on.

Lord Rosebery wrote congratulating me on my *moriturus* appointment. Mr. Gladstone, however, did not like changes; he had been used to the Buckhounds, he liked Courts and appanages: his traditional temperament in all these matters was all but out-

landish. I remember his once gravely regretting to me the new and explicit mile-stones and finger-posts substituted by the County Councils for the old, battered gibbets, placed here and there, so undecipherable as to combine most of the disadvantages of blind guides. Mr. Gladstone preferred these.

I have a letter beginning, "Your foes are alive again." Mr. Gladstone had been bombarded that evening in the House of Commons with most disagreeable questions as to when he was going to do away with me. In a postscript he adds: "How is Guy Fawkes," a celebrated deer of the time, to which for some reason he had taken a fancy.

The battle over the Buckhounds raged during the whole of my three years of office, but, thanks to the Queen and Mr. Gladstone, we survived. The Queen, like Mr. Gladstone, had always been used to them, and to having a Master of the Buckhounds at her levees. Habit is ten times nature, so much so that she overlooked the fact that the Prince Consort never hunted with the Queen's hounds, and held the heterodox view that red deer should be stalked with the rifle at the cost of much exertion.

On September 8, 1893, the Home Rule Bill came up for second reading in the House of Lords. Lord Kimberley, who then led the House, had written to me asking me to speak in the debate. "We shall want all our speakers," he wrote. This was indeed the case. The Liberal Party in the House of Lords

with the dubious inclusion of some waverers, was still little more than a remnant. Besides, we were much stronger in convictions than in oratory.

From the time that Mr. Gladstone hurled Home Rule into the arena of party politics, in 1866, the Irish Question had always interested me. I can remember, as a Harrow boy, a summer afternoon at Pembroke Lodge, when Mr. Blennerhasset drove down to see my grandparents. Mr. Froude had come down to luncheon earlier, and when Mr. Blennerhasset arrived, Lady Russell, evidently much captivated by the romantic notion, introduced him to Mr. Froude as a Home Ruler. The trio then perambulated the lawn, conversing presumably on this great subject, with pauses of admiration for the river view. Lord Russell, I imagine, had withdrawn for his afternoon nap, with a Waverley novel.

Since then, though in a desultory way, I had carried about with me the notion of Home Rule, or, as it would now be called, Irish Nationalism. The session of 1880 to 1885 was largely an Irish one; then came Lord Randolph Churchill's and Lord Carnarvon's "coquetting" with Home Rule; then came the Home Rule split, which rent in twain the Liberal Party; Mr. Gladstone's return to office in 1886, and the Home Rule and Land Purchase Bills laid upon the table of the House of Commons.

This started me reading more seriously about Ireland and its national sentiment; not perhaps

enough of the official literature of the subject. Blue books I have never been able to read, but I went back to the Act of Union time, and I read a good many forgotten pamphlets, broad sheets, and debates on the Union, the "Annual Register" of that time, and the contributions to the Irish Question of Charles Greville, Lecky, Goldwin Smith, Trollope, and Lever. I did most of this reading in the *tiède* climate of the British Museum; those were happy hours, favoured by the courteous Librarian and the stimulating currents of a host of people engaged in the same kind of task.

At that time, and for some time after, I was not well affected to the proposed changes in one connexion—administrative and legislative—with Ireland. A place like Gibraltar, the evidences of Empire and Dominions beyond the seas, the outdoor life I had been leading, all inclined me to a "very well as we are" attitude. Political insight or imagination are innate faculties which no good fairy dealt me at my birth; on the other hand, I must have been endowed at that time with the bumps of compromise and adjustment, and with little or no zeal for underlying principles. Thus, the more I read and the more I listened to Liberal, Tory, and Nationalist leaders, the more it seemed to me—the process was gradual—that Mr. Gladstone, although he much overstated, dragooned, and idealized the question, where the sober investigation of chartered accountants rather

than the zeal of the crusader was required, was yet moving on the right lines.

What is more, it seemed to me, in spite of Mr. Gladstone's hospitable invitation to the Tory leaders to crusade with him, that the Irish Question was the kind of thing which in England, saturated and infected by Party Government since the days of Queen Anne, could only be proposed and achieved on party lines.

This is a long digression, but it may be some plea or justification for an unhesitating acceptance of Lord Kimberley's invitation, full of hazards as I knew it to be. I do not know that I looked upon it as an "opportunity" (Lord Rosebery once or twice had suggested my speaking, and used this expression), nor did I expect to reveal myself to a listening senate as "*un de nos grands politiciens*," as Lord Vernon once introduced me to the Comte de Mun, out riding in the Bois de Boulogne, to our mutual embarrassment. But I espoused, for better or worse, the chance of having a go—to use a slang expression—on a great Parliamentary occasion.

Lord Kimberley had given me plenty of notice—if anything, too much—in which to marshal my arguments and drill my opinions; some of them, thanks to party exigencies, required discipline and drill. What is more, like a person travelling with too much luggage, I was encumbered with a large number of pretentious and painstaking notes taken



CAPTAIN HON. THOMAS LISTER, D.S.O., ELDEST SON
OF LORD RIBBLESDALE

ten years earlier. Luckily, common-sense asserted itself and freed me from a farrago of antiquated stuff and nonsense which would have certainly brought me to grief. In this farrago Mr. Burke, Lord Clare, Mr. O'Connell, Lord Fitzwilliam, Lord John Russell, and hosts of other time-expired actors on the stage of Ireland, were resuscitated to figure in a *ballo in maschera* of the Irish Question.

A few days before the debate I got quit of the "lessons of history" and my partiality for my own bookish pains, and took some real hold of the actual conditions and possibilities of Mr. Gladstone's Irish Policy. As to the speech itself, thanks to Lord Kimberley and the Whips, I came on at a very good hour—about 10 p.m.—the first night of the four days' debate. I dined with Lord Kimberley at the House of Lords. As usual he would only talk about fox-hunting, and the horses he had owned—most of these appeared to have been little short of ferocious animals, and were quite unmanageable by anybody else. On one occasion, when everybody on the Liberal side felt bewildered by Mr. Gladstone's violent Irish adventure, Lord Rosebery (so he told me) invited Lord Kimberley to go for a morning walk round Hyde Park, a constitutional to which the former nobleman was addicted. This walk contemplated an interchange of ideas, and was to act as a notion—clearer for both statesmen. Lord Kimberley gladly accepted the invitation. A fine,

still morning favoured pedestrianism and stimulated colloquy. However, as a notion-clearer it was disappointing. After a cavalier reference to the muddle everybody was in over Ireland, Lord Kimberley devoted a fifty-five minute monologue to the rival methods of preserving fruit in Italy, Germany, France and Scandinavia.

On the occasion of our dinner, however, his Lordship, on the analogy of rousing your horse by every resource available before charging a stiff fence, personally administered to me a strong whisky and soda.

Before dinner, the climate of the House had been frigid and hostile in a kind and degree which I never experienced before or since. Lord Spencer was certainly in a difficult position, he had been looked upon as the paladin of Law and Order. He had been identified, to a striking extent, with the English Constitution. At one time, after the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke, he used exceptional powers with unflinching courage in a manner which elicited the applause of the Loyalists and the respect of the Nationalists. With a wave of his red beard he could dispose of the liberty of his subjects. I question very much whether Lord Spencer was at heart a Home Ruler. By nature obstinate and inflexible, determined to carry out his instructions, his conversion to Home Rule seemed as remarkable in its way as Sir William Harcourt's.

It could only be explained by personal loyalty to Mr. Gladstone, and out and out loyalty to party.

That evening, having regard to his antecedents, he was looked upon by the Unionist Party and the Irish Peers in the House of Lords as a turncoat. I do not myself believe that they gave him credit for sincerity, nor do I think that the explanation he always offered for his change of front, namely that when once Lord Carnarvon and Lord Randolph Churchill coquetted with the Nationalist leaders, when they came into Office in 1886, the game was up. The only chance for the Union, in his opinion, was a continuity of policy by both Parties. This continuity was set aside by the new Government; from that moment Lord Spencer considered Home Rule to be the only working alternative.

His oratory on this particular evening did not help matters. Dignified enough in tone, it was unrelieved by historical or literary grace; there was very little personal about it. With an intellectual modesty he gave us few of his own experiences. One felt his speech to be collated laboriously from Blue Books and White Papers and the reports of Commissions and Committees. The speech shambled along and suffered, not only in delivery and arrangement, but from the tameness of his vocabulary. For some years as Whip, and as enjoying his personal friendship, I saw a good deal of Lord Spencer and he often wrote to me about public business and

fox-hunting. In conversation, or on his feet in the House of Lords, he seemed to me to have no command of happy expression, but in his letters (it required ingenuity to decipher them) there were often capital sentences in old-fashioned, agreeable and simple style. But I should think that, with all his great qualities of industry, devotion to the public service and personal integrity, Lord Spencer was wanting in the "vision" which Mr. Lloyd George is constantly recommending.

To return to my speech. By ten o'clock things were much more propitious. The Opposition had dined, most of them in evening-clothes, many of them well. "Feed the tiger" was the worldly advice given to some anxious wife by the Gamaliel she consulted, and the tiger had been fed—many of my Tory friends and acquaintances looked benevolent. Lord Lonsdale, in fine linen, sparkling studs, and gardenia such as one seldom sees, standing by the Throne, remains a cherished recollection. When the time was fully come that I should be delivered, I was most kindly treated. As I had no sort of position or repute as a statesman, as I happened to be Master of the Buckhounds and a placeman, and as anything to do with hounds or horses commended itself in those distant days to both Houses of Parliament, I escaped in some measure the odium which the collective sense of an immense and angry majority meted out during that debate to the Liberal leaders.

One or two things I said in my speech attracted the notice of Lord Salisbury. Indeed he had interrupted me rudely—the impersonal rudeness of a super-man. In a boyish passage of self-revelation, which even at this distance of time I find pertinent and reasonable, I had stated my mistrust of resolute Government, and my intuition verging on conviction, that we must find some way of managing Ireland by consent.

“Confessions” said Lord Salisbury, “are always interesting, from St. Augustine to Rousseau, and from Rousseau to Lord Ribblesdale.” Well, without examining these relative interests, I was certainly more right about Ireland that evening than was Lord Salisbury.

CHAPTER XVII

A RAILWAY JOURNEY WITH MR. PARNELL ¹

I ONCE had the good fortune of travelling *tête-à-tête* from Euston to Holyhead with Mr. Parnell. It was in July or August of 1887, and I was going over to Ireland to judge at the Dublin Horse Show. I see Mr. O'Connor, in his lately-published "Life," discounts the general impression that Mr. Parnell was a very reticent man in private life, and he tells us that when he met anybody who could be interested in his ideas, or who wanted to draw him out, he would speak as freely as anybody else. I was very ready to be interested, almost rudely determined to draw him out, and a *coupé* in the Irish mail gave Mr. Parnell no chance of escape from me. At all events I found him the pleasantest and easiest of travelling companions, and we conversed, apparently without any effort on his side, between Euston and Rugby just as if we had known each other all our lives. I daresay I was becoming a little tiresome, for as we left Rugby he proposed in a very serious voice our both trying to go to sleep.

¹ Reprinted by courtesy of *The XIXth Century*, from the issue dated December, 1891.

“Sir, we had a good talk,” I can say with Dr. Johnson. I took some dull and careful notes of our conversation next morning, and I remember I breakfasted late with Mr. Arthur Balfour, an invigorating antidote, and told him a little about my journey with Mr. Parnell. I intended using these notes as little as possible, they seemed so colourless as compared to my unwritten recollections. I remember almost everything he said, the way he said the things, the way he looked, many of the actual words he chose, but I despair of conveying these recollections in proper words, and so in great measure I must use the notes.

Of course, I had often seen Mr. Parnell before, and I recognised him taking his ticket just in front of me. We were in very good time, but he disappeared, and I did not see him on the platform, so thought no more about him one way or the other until he got into my *coupé* just as the train was beginning to move. He arranged his effects with almost old-maidish precision, and put on a small and unbecoming skull-cap—the same sort of cap, I suppose, as the one Mr. O’Connor tells us “he startled and amused the world” by wearing in court. He then composed himself full length to read; it looked to me like one of Jules Verne’s books; he did not read, however, but looked straight in front of him at the black window. I had already opened, I need hardly say, with the weather, a subject upon which we had

found ourselves discouragingly unanimous, and I felt these reading preparations would never do.

Early in that Session, I think, Mr. Parnell had asked leave to bring in an Arrears of Rent Bill for Ireland. Speaking generally, and speaking from memory, this Bill set aside the principle of the legislation which had fixed judicial rents in Ireland for terms of fifteen years. Under Mr. Parnell's proposed Bill, any Irish tenant who had paid in a certain proportion of his judicial rent was to be entitled to take his landlord again into the Land Court for a fresh adjustment. At the time it was styled a dishonest Bill, and was hounded out of the House of Commons in deep disgrace.

This is all old history now, but it is history which has repeated itself, the present Government having since practically admitted the principle they were then so indignant about. I thought they were wrong at the time. With their strong battalions they have done as they pleased with the Bill at its later stages. Tactically it seemed to me a good opportunity for a young Government to get, as it were, into its saddle and settle its stirrups. Besides, I had over and over again heard Mr. Parnell attacked for never having committed himself to anything like a constructive measure, and it therefore seemed to me a rational opportunity of, at all events, hearing what the Irish Parliamentary Party had to say upon a measure of their own devising. Most of all I dis-

liked the "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" spirit, which at that time so pervaded the Unionist mind, and I expressed these views and this dislike to Mr. Parnell. That is how we began. On that particular point he spoke with little concern. "I suppose," he said, "the Government thought it a dodge of mine; there was no dodge; my Bill was only what I thought the proper way of meeting a certain condition of things."

From that we came to talk about the abstract aspect of Home Rule, and this part of our conversation was so impersonal that I shall quote almost literally from my notes.

"Mr. Parnell believes very much in the immediate effect of industrial development of all kinds, and in the new sense of responsibility which the administration of their own affairs will give to the Irish people. England and Scotland are highly developed and prosperous countries, and so naturally see risks in any great constitutional change. Ireland is in so bad a way that the risks of such an experiment as Home Rule do not present themselves to her. There need be no failure, although the first years of a Home Rule Parliament, he admits, must be years of great anxiety. I asked him whether Home Rule had not come to mean to the average Irishman the turning of sixpences into shillings, and what he thought would happen if the people of Ireland ever woke up to find that even under Home Rule the sixpences were still

only sixpences. He again said it would be a very anxious time at first; but he struck me as either shutting his eyes wilfully, or being unable to see how enormously the difficulties of the Irish question would be increased by the economic failure of the experiment of Home Rule. . . .

"Home Rule is certain to come; the only alternative to Home Rule is Lord Salisbury's 'resolute Government,' and that, as things are now, is impossible. Resolute Government is conceivable, and it might be successful. You would have to get rid of Irish representation in the House of Commons, and have an able and courageous administrator in Ireland with a strong executive under him—no Irishmen—who would settle the land and develop the resources of the country, such as butter factories, woollen trade, harbours and fisheries. Success would have to depend upon the material improvement of the conditions of the Irish people under such an administration, and upon the extent and volume of such material improvement. . . .

"Lord Carnarvon, he said, had a very complete scheme of Home Rule worked out in all its details; but the scheme was only to come into operation gradually—that is, Home Rule was to be a measure granted by degrees to Ireland on her preferment. . .

"Speaking of Mr. Gladstone's 1886 Bill, he said the interest of the money to buy out the landlords paralysed the Home Rule Bill. He further said that

the landlords were to get too much for their land, and would never get such good terms offered again. I objected that something was due to them for what, all things considered, was very like eviction, and that this element should be considered side by side with purely agricultural valuation. Mr. Parnell would have nothing to say to this view. None of the landlords need go, and most of them would stay. Ulster, he said, would have accepted the Home Rule Bill had it passed, as she would not have deserted her co-religionists disseminated over the rest of Ireland. . . .

“Lord Salisbury, he said, has a great chance. The Irish Party are quite willing to be reasonable, although they would prefer a scheme coming from Mr. Gladstone, and would be sorry to see him dished by the Unionists. He considers Lord Salisbury an insurmountable obstacle to such a contingency, saying he was a man ‘above treaties and negotiations.’ Mr. Gladstone, he thought, would support a measure introduced by Lord Salisbury, provided it met the views of the Irish Party as a national settlement. Nothing short, he said, of what we are asking for can satisfy those views or effect that settlement. Home Rule is sure to come within a very few years. When history comes to be written we shall find it has taken a very short time to bring about. He thinks Lord Hartington not being in the Cabinet will lead to difficulties.”

Then we got upon agriculture and local shows and Agricultural Societies. He spoke with approval of how well the Horse Show at Ball's Bridge was managed, and how much good it did; but he did not talk or seem to care much about horses, and although since the great trial we know he was a subscriber to the hounds in his neighbourhood, Mr. O'Connor says nothing of his hunting. I have seen him riding in a mustardy brown coat. He had not, considering his figure, a nice seat on a horse, and he held his reins very short. That evening, I remember, he said it was folly to boycott hunting.

Local Agricultural Societies, he thought, should be encouraged and subsidised by Government, and he desired to see a Board of Agriculture established in Dublin, with a staff of peripatetic lecturers and local agents. Instruction in the cultivation of green crops, and in a more provident system of dairying, should at once be started. Every Irishman's cow, he told me, now calves at the same time, and goes dry at the same time, and so the markets are either flooded with milk or drained. If this were only better managed, Ireland might break the back of the Brittany butter trade.

At that time Mr. Balfour had just decided to make a Government grant in aid of sound stallions and pedigree bulls up and down the country, the action of the National League having much discouraged the stallion and bull-owning class. I told Mr. Parnell

about this, and he seemed pleased and surprised at Mr. Balfour's action, but courteously incredulous of the reasons I gave for its necessity. He spoke a great deal about the deep-sea fisheries possibilities of Ireland. Harbours should be provided, although he did not specify by whom, along the west coast. He said that wherever you find a harbour now, you will find a thriving state of things; where there is no harbour the seaboard population have to use little boats which can be hauled up on the beach out of danger every night; such boats cannot get out to the good fishing grounds or face the Atlantic swell, and so, he said, these rich fishing grounds are exploited by French and Manx fishermen under their very noses.

He also spoke of Government forestry. Government was to employ labour in extensive trenching, draining, and planting, and he desired to see railway rates compulsorily lowered for the inward carriage of fish and the outward carriage of agricultural produce.

Mr. O'Connor tells us that Mr. Parnell had been a practical farmer at one period of his life and could talk learnedly upon practical farming. He adds that Mr. Parnell astonished his fellow-prisoners in Kilmainham by the diversity of his knowledge on many subjects, and that this knowledge was imparted with the curious simplicity of a mind that was very simple and quite free from any sense of the ridiculous. He certainly astonished me with some of his material

development formulas fully as much as he can ever have astonished his fellow-prisoners. If this bountiful Rasselas is right about his fish-curing, dairying, and forestry, the solution of an economic problem, not the satisfaction of a national sentiment, comprises the whole Irish question. I asked him whether, if by an enchanter's wand we could raise the price of Irish stock, horses, cattle, and sheep, fifty per cent., and keep it there, we should hear any more of the national sentiment. Mr. Parnell said we should. For my part I firmly believe we should not.

Mr. Balfour had been appointed Irish Secretary in March of that year. Writing on the 7th of that month, *The Freeman's Journal* declared it was "like breaking a butterfly to extend Mr. Balfour on the rack of Irish politics." The same newspaper was quite as imaginative on the 8th, when it said, "to make the refined and dilettante Arthur Balfour Chief Secretary for Ireland at this moment is like throwing a lame dove among a congregation of angry cats": and on the 27th of April it commented gravely upon "his phenomenal deficiency in power of retort." From that time forward, during the session of 1887, daily articles appeared in the Opposition Press, *The Pall Mall* screeching in their van, accusing Mr. Balfour of ignorance and inability to understand the Irish question. But none knows so well where the shoe pinches as he who has to wear it. Mr. Parnell had formed a very different opinion of Mr. Arthur

Balfour's calibre. Speaking to me that evening he doubted Mr. Balfour's nervous organisation standing the stress of the office, but he spoke with absolute conviction of his ability. These are his actual words about Mr. Balfour: "He must be a man of great capacity, for he has grown into the question." I asked him if the Irish party really disliked him so much. Mr. Parnell said he thought only as the incarnation of an odious policy; the party rather liked him in other ways; they liked his mettle and his adroitness in retort and debate. Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, he added, was the man they could not stand; no impression could ever be made on him. Mr. Parnell tried to remember "something about a bull's hide and brazen front," which was quoted about Mr. Campbell-Bannerman by somebody. "It was very good," said Mr. Parnell seriously, "but I never remember poetry."

But this paper is much too long, and I must conclude. Mr. O'Connor thinks that old stories of the time of the Rebellion and the Famine, told him as a boy by Hugh Gaffny, told afterwards by himself in his "usual tranquil manner" in the evenings after grouse-shooting at Aughavanna, have conspired to form the Parnell of history. Mr. Parnell spoke to me that evening of those old unhappy days, of the coffin-ships, of the fever-stricken, famishing, packed cargo, of the wholesale expatriation of their people by the landlords. He spoke of those days entirely

without feeling, entirely without prejudice, in tranquil manner. It was perhaps this sober, aloof way of telling me these things which made me feel the sombreness and graveness of his description.

Delicta majorum immeritus lues. The landlords of Ireland at that time, he said, were fighting for their lives; there was not room for all on the land, and they emigrated their people. It was a solution, but it was carried out in a barbarous and cruel way, and it is the descendants of the men and women driven out of Ireland then, who are sending the funds to Ireland from America now.

I fancy we crossed over to Ireland in the same boat, although I did not see him at Kingstown or on the boat. He certainly did not, like myself, join a party who were attacking an underdone round of beef and green pickles in the saloon. We met and we parted strangers. I never saw him to speak to again; even had we met again he would not have recognized me, for during the whole of that journey he never so much as looked at me.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE HOUSE OF LORDS

I ADMIT that after the throwing out of the Budget in 1909 prudence and circumspection seemed to be thrown to the winds, and much as I disliked it myself at the time, we asked for the Parliament Bill.

At the same time, about the Parliament Bill I have modified my views. Something certainly had to be done, and on the whole Mr. Asquith's arrangements are ingenious, practical and constitutional. The House of Lords is left with great powers of delay; it is deprived of the power of summary rejection, which has always got us into trouble.

In 1895, out-and-out House of Lords man as I am, I thought something of this kind should have been done by Lord Salisbury. He could have managed it better than anybody else. May I quote myself¹ at this time? Lord Salisbury had just come in with a large majority. In some ways it might be claimed a vindication for the House of Lords:

¹ Except for the first three paragraphs this chapter originally appeared as an article in *The XIXth Century*, of August, 1895, and is here reprinted by courtesy of the Editor. It is now interesting as revealing the opinions of a peer in the old House of Lords.

"By the Reform Bill of 1884 we accepted the principle of democracy without qualification. The House of Lords is now the second chamber of a democracy. Without perplexing ourselves with any ideal considerations, let us see how far the House of Lords, as at present constituted and advised, satisfies the everyday practical requirements of such an assembly.

"It is not my intention to attempt what is styled a constitutional treatment of my subject. Extracts and paraphrases from the works of constitutional jurists are a weariness of the flesh. Nor do I propose to take my readers back to the Wars of the Roses, but, at the risk of egotism, I intend to write about the House of Lords as I see it myself. Pleasant as it might be to trace through the centuries the vicissitudes and actions of the House of Lords, to record vivid incidents in its history, to linger over the picturesque points of view of its almost unbroken past, I cannot think that such an exercise affords fair standards of present-day comparison. It is no new thing to find the House of Lords at loggerheads with the House of Commons, but the Lords and Commons of, say 1719, when there was a great to-do between the two Houses over a Peerage Bill, can no more be compared with the Lords and Commons of 1895, than the Lords of the Parliament of 1407, who asserted their right over the Commons to initiate the consideration of new taxes, can be

compared with the Lords of the Parliament of 1892, assenting of necessity to the startling principles of last year's Budget.

"Yet, if the lessons of history do not help us by way of comparison and analogy, they lead up to a general conclusion which is pertinent to the proper consideration of the present phase of the House of Lords question, and to a real appreciation of a recent proposal which had in view the readjustment of the legislative relations of the two Houses. That general and pertinent conclusion I take to be this. The history of the House of Lords is the history of adjustments. I do not mean adjustments brought about by changes in numbers, or constitution, or procedure, conspicuous and significant as some of these have been. I mean adjustments brought about by the acceptance of the House of Lords from time to time of what are termed constitutional understandings, which have invariably imposed limits upon their powers. Thus, whatever we think of the House of Lords, of second chamber or single chamber systems, whether we think the case against the Lords a strong case or a weak case, the time for testing it well chosen or ill chosen, Lord Rosebery's proposal has history and experience on its side. The late Prime Minister can cite these reputable authorities for the justification of his intention of proceeding by resolution and not by Bill; and of expressing the need of a further adjustment of the relations of the Houses in the

terms of resolutions submitted to the House of Commons.

“If we look at the history of money bills, we find such a need expressed and such adjustments successfully arrived at in 1407, 1671, 1678, and 1860. In all these cases the procedure was by resolution. As it has taken over 400 years to arrive at satisfactory constitutional rules about money bills, I do not for a moment suppose, as I have heard sanguine Radicals assert, that a resolution of the House of Commons would settle the question, but Lord Rosebery’s plan was no loose guess at the solution of a constitutional problem peculiarly provocative of loose guessing. He hit upon the only way of getting to close quarters with the sense of people which could claim the sanction of ancient usage and of the immediate circumstances alike. Moreover, it may be well to point out that a reform of the House of Lords and an adjustment of its legislative relations with the House of Commons are two totally different things. The reform of either House is the particular and intimate concern of the House to be reformed. An adjustment of legislative relations would appear to be a matter for the House of Commons to suggest and for the electorate to confirm.

“Before passing to the House of Lords as the second chamber of a democracy, let us take a look at the peer in his private capacity. How does he

stand the test of the strongly emphasised democratic ideas of 1885? Upon the whole, very well. On great occasions in the House of Lords, such as the second reading of the Home Rule Bill, he is severely handled by the descriptive reporters of the Liberal press. According to these graphic gentlemen, peers are distinguished to a melancholy degree by knock-knees and receding foreheads; and a pamphlet now before me, enjoying some vogue with platform speakers, is enlivened by a broadsheet of degenerate types of peers. At Radical meetings, and even in the House of Commons, we are the targets of epigram. Gilded chamber and proud titles notwithstanding, peers are to be dealt with, the treatment is to be drastic, so on and so on; I have listened to it time after time, and it all means nothing or next to nothing. Outside the picturesque in the Party press and the conventionalities of a Party platform, to be Lord somebody or other is still a popular thing.

“Within the limits of a peer’s electoral possibilities his peerage is, broadly speaking, in his favour. Provincial municipal elections, are, perhaps, hardly a good test. A peer who stands for his County Council almost invariably resides in the county. He spends money there, employs labour, and more or less identifies himself with its interests and doings, especially at Christmas time, and in the matter of coals, blankets, and port wine. But let us take the late

London municipal elections. A large proportional class representation of peers stood for seats upon the London County Council last March. Some were elected, some were not. I myself belong to the latter category. But I think that the fact of my being a peer not only gave me a good start, but may even have contributed adventitious point and sagacity to my views on the graver municipal and social problems.

“Other reasons for the personal popularity of a peer are not far to seek. The ease of his circumstances from his youth up tends to a good-humoured attitude and gesture towards the world at large. To be pleased with yourself may be selfish or it may be stupid. It is often both, but it is seldom actively disagreeable, and usually it is very much the reverse. That property has duties as well as rights is a saying which is entitled to all the respect due to its origin, but even the rights count for something. All peers do not open bazaars, attend funerals, preside at political gatherings and charity dinners, or recognise that their leisure specially designs them for tedious functions and long journeys. With nice horses to ride, high pheasants to shoot, an heritage not only of broad acres but of mutual kindly relations towards his tenantry, his cottagers, and the tradesmen of his market town, he may neglect these graver duties, embarrass his fortunes and his posterity, and in many ways misconduct himself before he

outruns the prestige of an old name and of tried association. In England these institutions still stand a heavy mortgage. This is especially the case if he does not deal with co-operative stores or manage his estate through a firm of town solicitors.

“So much for the peer outside the precincts of his House. Now let us look at him inside. Here he comes off less well. Appearances are against him. Lord Chesterfield warned his son that the world judges you generally by what you seem, not by what you are. It has more particularly been pointed out by a keen critic of our Constitution that a revising Assembly that does not assemble and which looks as if it does not care how it revises *may* be of use, but it will hardly convince mankind that it *is* so. Let us see how far a case against the House of Lords on this mere question of appearances can be made out. I remember when I succeeded, as a very young man—I never had the opportunity of contesting a seat in the House of Commons—I was advised by a relative to take some advantage of my seat in the House of Lords. ‘You will find it,’ he said, ‘a pleasant lounge.’ So it is. Many people are of my relative’s opinion, especially after Easter, when the daily attendance gets quite respectable. The pleasant walk across the lawns of St. James’s Park, the comfortable crimson benches inviting repose of mind and body alike, the certainty

of getting home in good time to dress for dinner, and of a season of immunity from the door-bell and her ladyship's notes and telegrams, become matters of agreeable habit with an average of say from fifty to seventy peers from May to July. The routine business gets through quickly; questions are asked and answered, attention called to this or that without interruption, whether of approval or dissent. Ninety-nine nights out of every hundred the House of Lords is a machine with neither pulse nor temperature.

"Bolingbroke has said that the Commons were like a pack of hounds—they liked the Minister who showed them sport. Individually, no doubt, so would the peers. But habit is ten times nature, and the habit of the House of Lords involves the converse of all that Bolingbroke meant.

"Nothing, for instance, can be more different than the ways of the House of Lords and the House of Commons. With a very few distinguished exceptions, the average House of Lords' debating manner opposes a statement with a counter-statement, cites a personal experience to meet an arguable point, coldly acquiesces in the accustomed, civilly distrusts theory, and, above all, watches the clock. "At this hour of the evening" is the almost invariable preface to any observations made after 7.15 p.m. Lord Granville once remarked that a rustle of lawn sleeves on

the right reverend bench was the warning that it was time to think of other things. Lay peers begin to fidget, and we cry quits by consent. I have often been struck, looking down into the House of Commons from the Peers' Gallery, by the pains taken—or apparently taken—by its members to be abreast of the subject under discussion. Men who one knows will never open their lips on any stage of the Bill, sit encumbered with a mass of papers, and pore over its provisions line by line and clause by clause. Such self-realisation is a wholesome symptom of a recognition of their duty, and of their responsibility to their constituents. But there is nothing of this sort in the House of Lords. The Order of the Day is as much as most of us care to grapple with. A peer with a blue-book under his arm and a bill bulging from his pocket is a disquieting spectacle.

“Roughly speaking, individual peers of either party let their front bench think and speak for them, the right of private judgment theoretically exercised by the cross benches when expressed in speech being thought very tiresome.

“It has been pointed out that the average House of Lords' mind is easily led captive. Probably the least sentimental assembly in the world, it is peculiarly susceptible to the authority and magic of a strong personality. On a celebrated occasion Lord Lyndhurst recited at enormous length all

the black-letter authorities on a subject. Lord Lyndhurst got his way, not by the weight of his black-letter citations, which the pastoral peers who swell our full-dress debates could hardly be expected to appreciate, but by the accustomed yet ever vivid impression of Lord Lyndhurst on his legs. Thus, when Lord Salisbury rises to recommend a perilous success to the cohorts he controls, when the House 'gives audience and attention still as night' to the sequence of clear-cut argument and illustration, every phrase poised to a hair, every point piercing to the quick, the whole speech acting like oxygen on the languid air of the House of Lords, it is easy to realise the burden of responsibility which personal ascendancy lays upon the leader of the Conservative Party in the House of Lords.

"Charles the Second used to say that attending the House of Lords amused him as much as going to the theatre. Either the plays were very dull or the House of Lords was very different. A year or two ago we were treated to what was known at the time as the revolt of the eldest sons, who do not appear to agree with Charles the Second. As far as I understand the movement, several members of the House of Commons, heirs to peerages, did not like the look of their serener political future, and I remember an article in this Review in which their spokesman explained that, when the accident

of death consummated the accident of birth, they would feel like flies in amber, or specimens in a naturalist's collection. To avoid these uncouth sensations they had drafted a Bill, under the provisions of which they could divest themselves of their rights by declining to obey the summons to the House of Lords. Yet, even assuming their Bill to have passed into Law, I may be permitted to doubt any very considerable advantage being taken of its privileges, and, in view of Lord Selborne's recent experiment, the Jules Verne adventure may now be relegated to the domain of history.

“‘Some day or other,’ said an observant critic, ‘its slack attendance will destroy the House of Lords.’ I dissent altogether, although I admit the value of appearances, and that the House of Lords disregards them. But it is a common error of judgment that a thing cannot be well done which has been done in a different way, or taken a shorter time than conventional opinion expects. The House of Lords’ work is well done. I need not point to the discharge of its high legal functions as the Supreme Court of Judicature and Appeal of this country. The fact that our most eminent lawyers—the Lords of Appeal—are peers of Parliament, means that legislation is subjected to a broadside of the most authoritative legal criticism in the country. The Private Bill Committees, dealing as they do with all kinds of large industrial undertakings, involving

heavy expenditure and the nice adjustment of complicated vested interests, give general satisfaction. As everybody knows, the parties appear by eminent counsel before a committee of five lay peers, chosen, with the exception of the Chairman, from the day-in day-out attendance of the House. I believe that the soundness and justice of their decisions are seldom called in question, and it may be worth remarking here that the committee is frequently appealed to by the learned counsel, not as a court enjoying in any sense the authority of special knowledge, but as mere men of honour, of plain common-sense, accustomed by the administration of their own estates to form practical judgments upon the very kind of considerations raised by, say, a large railway or water scheme.

“Then the House of Lords is a convenient debating society. Subjects of all sorts and sizes which, from pressure of business, could not be brought forward in the House of Commons—such, for instance, as marriage with a deceased wife’s sister, or the Sunday opening of museums—are certain of a respectful hearing and decent discussion. Closure, except by the clock or the grouse shooting, is unknown. There is practically no “in order” or “out of order” in the House of Lords. A peer, for instance, might raise a discussion upon the whole question of allotments or the profitable cultivation of asparagus by calling attention to a statistical

return on the current prices of beef in Paris and Chicago issued by the Board of Agriculture. Anything to do with the Army and the Navy interests the House of Lords, many of whom have served the Queen, and some of whom are distinguished officers on the active list.

“On questions affecting the machinery of local government, agriculture, and the tenure of land, the Lords are, as it were, thoroughly at home. They understand the facts and needs of country life. The accidents of their circumstances have given them the advantage, of which we hear so much, of a technical education. Their eyes, ears, and hands have taught them things not to be learnt from blue-books, statistical returns, or even the special commissioners of *The Daily Chronicle*.

“‘Although,’ said a republican peer of the last century, ‘I am in favour of a parliamentary king and a parliamentary army, I am not in favour of a parliamentary religion.’ But, in spite of the polemical attention which their proceedings from time to time excite, we still enjoy the countenance and exhortation of the right reverend bench. I need hardly say that upon all legislation affecting the hydra-headed interests of a State establishment and State endowment, of Church schools, and free schools, and of social morals generally, the bishops, if they did not invariably intervene with acceptance, always do so with authority.

"It always seems to me that eminent Church dignitaries have striking faces. Whether cause or effect, they go with preferment. Apologists defend the House of Lords as a picturesque institution; even opponents like the earlier Mr. Chamberlain admit its claim in this respect. In these days of frock-coats and silk hats, the lawn-sleeved prelates, the violent black and white of their canonicals against the crimson background of the benches, the mellow *clair-obscur* of the House help to make it so in fact, I have heard it said that Mr. Gladstone attributes the bishops' impaired authority, in great measure to their having, not so many years ago, given up wearing full-bottomed wigs. But this was before my time, and I delight in the bishops as they are. Failing Velasquez, I should like Mr. Sargent to paint me the peers spiritual in Parliament assembled.

"But on important occasions the House of Lords wears a very different aspect from that presented by the everyday manners and customs I have tried to describe. From all kinds of out-of-the-way places its members flock to Westminster. However leisured and easy-going, they take immense pains to get there. I remember my father hurrying home from Morocco to vote with the Liberal party on the disestablishment of the Irish Church.

"Whereas sixty or seventy at the outside engage in the rare divisions which take place on a routine

night, 460 peers took part in the division on the second reading of the Home Rule Bill of 1893. Upon that occasion the minority which supported the Bill (which had passed the second reading in the Commons by a majority of forty-three) reached forty-one. The majority which threw out the Bill numbered 419, it being thus rejected by 378 votes. I do not cite these figures controversially, but to show what the House of Lords can do in the way of assembling and exercising its political rights when in the humour. At the same time they have a special significance. We live in days of legislation, some say too much, some say too little. Parliament is urged in many quarters to render services never previously attempted. Nobody, as yet, agrees as to how much or how little the State should interfere in the relations of labour and capital, in questions affecting supply and demand, freedom of contract, employers' liability, and the various problems which crowd in upon highly-civilized societies. But it appears to be conceded on all sides that, within limits, the State *is* to interfere. Setting aside the question whether or not standards of expectation have been raised which the operation of natural laws foredooms to disappointment, it seems certain that if ever they are to have expression in the clauses of Bills before Parliament they will warrant the jealous scrutiny of a second chamber.

“Now, with a House of Commons so frankly and freely democratic, and a House of Lords so frankly and freely the reverse, differences of opinion may easily arise between the Houses, not so much upon the old questions of privilege or even of parliamentary reform, as upon questions of social legislation, and may lead to controversies which, in the present tone and temper of politics, it may be difficult to avert.

“Compromise has averted such collisions in the past. This was the case in 1884. But, by way of illustration of the present temper of politics, that particular compromise was described by a Nestor of the Liberal party as resembling all the compromises between the Houses he had known in his long experience, in that it was due to the treachery of the leaders and the cowardice of the followers.

“The fact that decisions of the House of Commons are liable to be reversed by an inconveniently congested majority in the Lords, a majority which at no other times gives any sign of active political life, goes a long way to obscure and even outweigh the value and the authority of the decision thus affirmed. The symphony of Amen is so loud as to be a little discordant even in the ears of many whose voices have swelled the chorus. A second chamber, not responsible in the democratic sense of responsibility to anybody but themselves, must make up for this



A Mighty Hunter!

"A MIGHTY HUNTER"

From a water-colour sketch by Lord Ribblesdale

defect by commanding confidence and respect, and that present Party success is too greedily assimilated to do either.

“To all practical intents and purposes Liberal legislation is at the mercy of all the tact and moderation—I had almost said the digestion—of the leader of the Conservative Party in the Lords. As Lord Lyndhurst promised should be done with the Corporation Act (1835), a Liberal measure can be transformed at will into a ‘Conservative arrangement.’ Nor do I see any likelihood of change in the present balance of Parties. Neither death nor creation seems to stop the constant intake on the Conservative benches, the constant outflow from ours. The Liberal Unionist peers are not likely to return, and, as was generally anticipated, some of them have taken office in the Conservative administration to which they are justly entitled by ability and disinterestedness. In the fullness of time, no doubt, Mr. Chamberlain will pass himself to the House of Lords. ‘Occupy till I come,’ he seems to be saying.

“I do not say that the result of these hypothetical differences of opinion would be different in a more equally-balanced second chamber; the issues of which I am thinking are precisely of the kind upon which the *raison d’être* of a second chamber naturally and logically asserts itself. But, affirmed by such a majority as Lord Salisbury commands, the action of the House of Lords must constantly lay itself

open to the very kind of imputation to which a second chamber should not be laid open. The House of Lords has come to be looked upon, not as an instrument of Government, but as a weapon of Party.

“Such, then, appears to be the weakness of the House of Lords in its present constitution as the second chamber of the democracy. Can that constitutional weakness be dealt with by reform? And here, perhaps, we may glance at what has been already done in this direction.

“In one of his attacks upon the Prime Minister, the Duke of Argyll said that the peers had several times, by solemn votes, declared their willingness to consider any really wise and sound reform tending to strengthen and enlarge the constitution of the House. That may be so, but what, setting aside for the moment their solemnity, have these votes amounted to? Since 1832 up till now, a period of most active reform, almost revolution, in every department of thought, manners and legislation in England, the achievements of the peers in this direction are confined to the abolition of voting by proxy and to the suspension of the legislative functions of a peer while going through the bankruptcy court. Very little else has been attempted. In 1856, the House of Lords rejected the principle of life peerages—in the view of much competent opinion, a heaven-sent opportunity. I did the same in 1869, although

Lord Russell's Life Peerage Bill enjoyed the support of the present leader of the Conservative party. It would have nothing to say to Lord Rosebery's proposals having for their object its increased efficiency. Lord Salisbury himself was the author of a very modest proposal in the life peerage way in 1888, and a very novel expedient tacked on to it, known as the Black Sheep Bill. He presented, as it were, on the same sheet of paper, a tonic and a purge. Both were destined to inglorious failure.

"I do not for a moment dispute the serious candour of the Duke of Argyll's personal vote, but there is obviously a wide difference between the House considering and the House carrying out reform, and the several solemn votes he refers to appear to have affirmed not indeed a *nolumus* but a direct *non possumus*. In theory, most people advocate the reform of the House of Lords by the House of Lords. It has all the vogue of a parrot cry, but I confess I see grave difficulties in practice. Reform designed to strengthen and enlarge its powers may not be, as it was recently described, an act of insanity, but it may conceivably be regarded as an act of imprudence. Upon the other hand, reform designed to weaken and impair its powers is almost more than can be asked or expected of the Lords, and appears to me all but a contradiction in terms.

"It is not within the limits either of my space or my inclination to enter upon an academic discussion on the merits of government by a single chamber or two chambers. I will only say this. Pushed to its logical issues, a second chamber system is a deadlock system. The stronger your second chamber the more awkward the deadlock. The legal rights of either party to adhere to its decisions being equal, you would have in England this very serious conjecture—popular liberties represented by the House of Commons arrayed against the political independence of the House of Lords.

"I quite agree that so serious a conjuncture is never likely to occur. As Windham said, there appears to be a principle of self-recovery in the British Constitution which somewhere and somehow brings it back into its proper course, and I have the greatest confidence in the common-sense faculty of my countrymen. As a race, we are pretty well aware of the dangers which the human talent for running into extremes exposes us to. We are occasionally made uncomfortable by the House of Lords as it is; we should be made more uncomfortable, and rather oftener, by the House of Lords if it were made stronger, and, although this is a pious opinion outside the intention of my article, we should be most uncomfortable, and always uncomfortable, without it.

"Moreover, a considerable and influential body of

Radical and Liberal opinion in the North of England and the Lowlands of Scotland are seriously concerned about their commerce, their capital, and the up-to-date Liberals in the House of Commons. The New Unionism, Collectivism, Socialism, and all the 'isms,' are disquieting portents. If Capital is to be the servant of Labour, and wages are to depend, not upon prices or demand, but upon the wage-earner's standard of comfort, how, they ask, are we to carry on? Whatever else may be urged against them, peers are not collectivists, care nothing for Karl Marx, and have not to fight seats where the Independent Labour party vote has to be reckoned with. Some time ago a candid friend of the Government, speaking in Edinburgh, in the heart of Mr. Gladstone's constituency, declared that, in view of the precarious position of our commerce, if it remained at the mercy of a popular body, and of an accidental and temporary majority in the House of Commons, what was wanted was not something weaker, but something much stronger than the present House of Lords. The actual words are worth quoting. 'Never before have we stood in such need as now of a second House commanding the confidence of the country, and responsible to it.' *The Spectator* was much delighted.

"Some years ago, Lord Salisbury compared the House of Lords to a flywheel acting as a check upon excessive speed in legislation. This simile was ob-

jected to by the Mr. Chamberlain of that day, who happened to be very angry with the House of Lords at the time. The function of a flywheel, he insisted, is to equalize; to quicken as well as to retard. When, he asked with fervour, has the House of Lords ever quickened anything? When has it not retarded anything? This, however, is a mere platform point. Neither the temper nor the reason of the people at large would approve of the initiation of important legislation in the House of Lords affecting their social conditions and, however remotely, their pockets, and no case can fairly be made against the Lords for not having attempted such improper tasks. The question is, then, not whether it has quickened, but how has it retarded? To what account has it turned its possibilities? How has it discharged its proper duties? Let us examine the experience of the last five-and-twenty years. In the last five-and-twenty years the two great parties have practically divided the sweets and responsibilities of office, and this 'share and share alike' seems to commend itself to the electors of this country.

"In the twelve and a half years of Conservative government you will hardly find a measure either revised, delayed, or rejected by the House of Lords; in the twelve and a half years of Liberal Government you have measures of first-class importance invariably revised, sometimes to an extent of involving

their loss, and frequently rejected on second reading. How does this work out if we push it to its logical conclusion? During half of our political life the House of Commons only legislates on sufferance, and during the other half the House of Lords only revises on sufferance. To put it in another way; with the Conservatives in office, revision and suspension by the House of Lords become matters of theory, with the Liberals in office matters of fact.

“Now is this reasonable? Is there any ground for supposing that whatever measure is sent up to the Lords by a Conservative administration must be right, any more than there is any ground for supposing that every measure sent up to the Lords by a Liberal administration must be wrong? Yet that is the position we are placed in; the position its antagonists have to attack. I will not try to apportion the responsibility of getting us there, but are we not upon both horns of Siéyès’s dilemma? According to that specialist a second chamber when it dissents is mischievous, when it agrees is superfluous. Fifty per cent., then, of our time we wriggle on one horn, and fifty per cent. of it on the other.

“Like our own Mr. McEwan, the Conservative leaders insist upon the value of the House of Lords. We must have a second chamber capable of revising and delaying hasty legislation. India and our great

dependencies, commerce and the British constitution, must not be left to the mercy of a snap division in the House of Commons. I quite agree. But should not sauce for the goose be sauce for the gander? As a matter of fact, a Conservative administration means single-chamber government. I suppose most Conservatives will agree that their own administration from 1886 to 1892 was a remarkable success. But if that be the case, a remarkably successful Conservative administration has furnished a striking object lesson in single-chamber government.

"The preponderance of Conservatives in the House of Lords may be variously accounted for. The tradition and tone of our public schools are Conservative. I remember our House at Harrow trying to upset the Liberal candidate's carriage in the general election of 1868. The Conservative was loudly cheered. I am afraid I cheered, too. Only the other day a friend of mine told me that when there was a question of getting his Eton boy a new valise, the boy wrote to say: 'Please don't let it be a Gladstone bag.' The confidential servants of great houses are Conservative. Their opinions are formed by the halls and parks and armorial bearings upon which they depend, and which, in their own interests, they regard as valuable institutions. This especially applies to gamekeepers and stablemen, the ministering angels of English boyhood, who suspect the

Radicals of lurid designs upon sport in general. Then, as I have already said, many peers have served in the Army. To go straight from a public school into a crack regiment, to serve in India or at Gibraltar, are influences and facts unfavourable to Liberalism. A vigorous past participle is the usual prefix to the Radical, his measures, and his creed on the rare occasions when current politics are the theme of conversation at mess. Then the individual circumstances of the House of Lords are conserving and conservative. To be born, as most of us members are, with a silver spoon in our mouths, even in these days of agricultural depression, inclines the House of Lords to accept things as they find them, and to discourage changes. *‘Ils ont la résignation des gens qui sont nés tout consolés.’* A few exceptions to this general rule (for the Liberal peer has always existed, and at times exerted himself), after a certain number of years of striving and voting in a dispirited minority, grow weary of kicking against the pricks and acquiesce where they are powerless to act.

“I said just now that history and experience were on Lord Rosebery’s side in his plea for readjustment of the relations of the House. But so is the present practice of the House of Lords. Unyielding virtue has never been its characteristic. Self-adaptation to circumstances has.

“As far back as 1719, Lord Peterborough wrote

a pamphlet in which he compared the House of Lords to a state of purgatory where the ultimate decrees of Providence (in Lord Peterborough's view, the Commons) were not arrested, but only suspended and delayed. And I observe that Mr. Justin McCarthy, the leader of the Irish Nationalist party, who could hardly be accused of casuistry, once cited the rejection of the Home Rule Bill by the House of Lords as a satisfying earnest of its passing into law in the near future. It is sometimes urged by unreflecting persons that the strength of the House of Lords lies in a noble indifference to what happens or to the personal consequences of its action. This is an assumption which seems to carry with it a peculiar satisfaction. But experience is seldom on the side of the unreflecting, and, as a matter of fact and of history, collision has always been averted, not by the courage of the House of Lords, but by its prudence. They are neither brave nor foolish. Mr. Bagehot, in his work on the English Constitution, unkindly says that upon great occasions the peers have always preferred their coronets to their convictions. I do not for a moment assent, but even peers are men of the world, and I dare say they sometimes think of them together.

"Not so very long ago Lord Salisbury explained, in a letter to *The Times*, that he had spoken and voted in favour of the Disestablishment of the

Irish Church in 1869, after having spoken and voted against it in the preceding session, not because he had changed his opinion—he still considered the measure to be founded on dangerous principles, and likely to lead to the gravest evils—but because a greater authority than the House of Lords had spoken, and the powers of the House of Lords were limited by the ascertained will of the people. To my mind that is a sound and constitutional vindication, and we may be sure that the ‘waverer’ of the 1831 Reform Bill is not an extinct animal. Ephemeral, if you like, the creature of the hour and circumstance. ‘A patched-up miscellaneous concern at best, of men half-reasoned, half-frightened over’—Mr. Charles Greville called the party of the ‘Waverers.’ Yet, upon that occasion of crisis and alarm, the situation was saved by this sagacious miscellany.¹ Stress appears to teach our senators wisdom. ‘*Les hommes faibles ne cèdent jamais à propos*’; but that cannot be said of the House of Lords. If the real occasion arises, can anyone doubt that they will not give way to the ‘supreme power’ (I am quoting from a classical speech of Lord Salisbury’s²) which the Franchise Bill of 1884 gave to the people of Great Britain and of Ireland?

¹ Seventeen peers voted for the Reform Bill in 1832, who had voted against it in 1831. Ten abstained; twelve who had abstained in 1831 voted for the Bill in 1832.

² At Newport, 1885.

“That is all very well, it may be said, but the occasion has not arisen. Where are the riots and illuminations and broken windows of 1832? Has the equivalent of a Nottingham Castle been burned down? Has the Lord Londonderry of the day been waylaid in his cabriolet? Did the newspapers appear in mourning when the Lords threw out the Home Rule Bill, or the Government dropped the Employers’ Liability Bill on the Lords’ amendments? It is perfectly true that no such things have happened. Nor do I think it surprising that the country should not have taken up the question of the House of Lords in the way in which it was taken up, for instance, in 1832, or even in 1884. Mr. Hume was of opinion that the Reform Bill was a stepping-stone to a republic in England and to separation in Ireland. I wonder what Mr. Hume would have said to the Reform Acts of 1867 and of 1884 which have placed the balance of political power in the hands of the town artisan and of the rural labourer. Yet, even these later Acts have had little if any of the effect Mr. Hume anticipated from the earlier Act. Indeed, many of the old trumpet-tongued watchwords have ceased to rouse. Liberal government has made not only a moderate but a material people. The mind of the electorate seems no longer set upon high things. Even without reading *La Révolte* or *Le Père Peinard*, the elector has only to look across the sea to realize that the mere absence

of institutions, whether thrones, churches, or hereditary chambers, does not of itself contribute to any general raising of the standard of comfort, to the enlargement of opportunity, or to the removing of inequalities. On the other hand, decent and sanitary houses, healthy and safe conditions of work, regular employment, fair wages, old-age pensions, are palpable as against ideal benefits. Comfortable considerations appear to be responsible for what we style the new spirit in politics. Politicians of all shades of opinion, and notably Mr. Chamberlain, are quite aware of its requirements and its bearing upon votes. Attractive social programmes seem therefore likely to occupy the attention of party wire-pullers, which a root-and-branch crusade against the House of Lords could do little to promote and might do much to obstruct. Besides, a crusade depends upon a Cœur de Lion, and Mr. Gladstone has retired from active politics.

“Yet, notwithstanding the result of the general election, many people agree that something will have to be done before long about the House of Lords. If this be so (and it will hardly be disputed), even extreme Radicals will admit in their calmer moments that the absence of popular ferment is a favourable condition to the solution of a practical administrative problem. Mr. John Bright was no great friend of the House of Lords. He held them

to be a peculiar and objectionable people. He mistrusted their birth, their manners, and their amusements. But, what did Mr. Bright say at a time of acute controversy between the Houses? After dismissing the constitutional check of an arbitrary creation of peers as a remedy worse than the disease, he said, 'I would rather see the Houses of Parliament, whether the one or the other, taking these questions up (the relations of the Houses) in a broad, philosophic spirit, than that they should wait until there is a ferment in the country approaching to confusion.'

"Cannot this be done now? Has not the time arrived for taking up this vexed question of the House of Lords in a broad, philosophic spirit? If Lord Salisbury had not always been frugal in the exercise of the immediate power of the House of Lords, he has given evidence upon conspicuous occasions that he appreciates the constitutional limits set upon that power; and even assuming Lord Rosebery's resolution to have affirmed in specific terms that under certain conditions the veto of the Lords should be extinguished, it would only have expressed the theory of Lord Salisbury's practice—that is, the practice of the House of Lords.

"I appeal unto Cæsar. Lord Salisbury has a great opportunity of rendering a signal service to his generation. The free hand which the general

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election has now given him, his personal ascendancy, the majority he arrays in the Lords, make him, in a sense, the master of the situation. Surely his talents, his statesmanship, the experience gained in the long transaction of great affairs of State, should make him its mediator."

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